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THE RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW

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CHATTAFIN.

My orchard blooms with high September light,
Opal and topaz star the burning grass ;
The hedgerow-fluted meadows climb the height,
And into gulfs of silver'd azure pass ;
The glittering hawk-weed turns to golden glass
The dew'd enamel of the rough pale field ;
With laden boughs, a lichen-hoary mass,
Rolls the arch'd canopy of autumn's yield,
And hides a liquid gloom beneath its leafy shield.

Come to me now, while all the winds are dumb,
And, floating in this earthly hyaline,
Bring me no whisper of the harsh world's hum,
But, with an indolence attuned to mine,
Pass to my soul the thoughts that wave in thine ;
Like those twin brooks that stir our field below
Whose sparkles meet in music, they divine
No first nor second place, but all they know
Is that with doubled strength they seaward leap and flow.

Come to me now ; come from the mart of men,
To this monastic court of apple-trees.
See, the grey heron rises from the fen,
And mark ! his slower mate by long degrees
Follows and flaps to stiller shades than these ;
They wing their lonesome meditative way
To some hush'd elbow of the reedy leas ;
O let us lose ourselves in flight, as they
Their hearts' sequestered law thus tenderly obey.

Here all is gained we waste our lives demanding ;
Here all things meet that, feverish, we pursue ;
The peace of God that passeth understanding
Falls on this place, and like a chrism of dew,
Without a murmur, steeps us thro' and thro' ;

Here hopes are pure, and aims are cool and high ;
Here Pisgah-glints of Heaven may greet our view ;
O come and in green light of glory lie,
And talk of song and death, without or flush or sigh.

Atheneum.

EDMUND GOSSE.

AUTUMN.

THOU burden of all songs the earth hath sung,
Thou retrospect in Time's reverted eyes,
Thou metaphor of everything that dies,
That dies ill-starred, or dies beloved and young,
And therefore blest and wise —
O be less beautiful, or be less brief,
Thou tragic splendor, strange and full of fear !
In vain her pageant shall the Summer rear !
At thy mute signal, leaf by golden leaf,
Crumbles the gorgeous year.

Ah, ghostly as remembered mirth, the tale
Of Summer's bloom, the legend of the Spring !
And thou, too, flutterest an impatient wing,
Thou presence yet more fugitive and frail,
Thou most unbodied thing,
Whose very being is thy going hence,
And passage and departure all thy theme ;
Whose life doth still a splendid dying seem,
And thou at height of thy magnificence .
A figment and a dream.

Stilled is the virgin rapture that was June,
And cold is August's panting heart of fire ;
And in the storm-dismantled forest-choir
For thine own elegy the winds attune
Their wild and wizard lyre ;
And poignant grows the charm of thy decay,
The pathos of thy beauty, and the sting,
Thou parable of greatness vanishing !
For me, thy woods of gold and skies of grey
With speech fantastic ring.

WILLIAM WATSON.

From The New Review.

THE NOVELIST IN SHAKESPEARE.¹

Two years ago I was sailing off the north-east coast of Denmark. A thick mist enveloped the ship, and the captain slacked speed, saying he would go no farther, for the land must be somewhere thereabout. Presently the helpless void began to break. A dim shadow crept along our side to the west. The shadow took first the shape of a low mountain, then of broken cliffs, finally of ruined walls. "That's Elsinore," said the captain, and in a moment we were standing out to sea.

Will you think me very weak that I wanted to go down on my knees on the deck? The vapory shadow of the walls of Elsinore was like the ghost of Hamlet, of Shakespeare, coming down through the mists of three hundred years.

At my home in the Isle of Man, directly facing the window of the room in which I work, there is another castle, built by the Danes. They say it is precisely on the model of the Castle of Elsinore. It stands on an island rock, and looks back at the town and out on the sea. I have seen this old castle every day for about a year, and I have never been neighbor to any inanimate thing that has had a stronger effect on my mind. It would be hard to say what that effect has been. I think its steadfastness has produced the most abiding impression. What our little town was like when the castle was built, no one knows. How many houses and streets have risen and fallen to ruins since then we cannot tell. But the castle remains. There it stands, and has stood for ten centuries, with its round tower against the sky. The sun rises on the face of it, and then it is grey; the sun sets at the back of it, and then it is black. On misty days it is only a ghostly white shape behind clouds of vapor; when storms are raging it is only a rock for the big seas to break over. But it is always

there; it does not pass away; it dominates everything.

Is this too bold a figure to describe the position of Shakespeare in literature? It is three centuries since he first appeared, and where he stood then he is still standing. Other figures have arisen and disappeared. The great figures of his own time have nearly all crumbled away. If they remain, it is only as ruins, haunted by the literary antiquary. But he is where he was, our beacon, our stronghold, and our greatest literary monument.

The festival we are here to celebrate is not a new one. After thirty-seven anniversaries, and as many speeches from the chair, it is manifestly difficult to say anything that shall be at once original and worthy to be remembered. I am satisfied that if there is any new thought on Shakespeare, it lies somewhere at the surface and needs no digging for. Therefore, I content myself with the idea that is nearest—the idea that is suggested by the daily occupations of my own life. I ask you to consider with me whether Shakespeare, who was the greatest of English dramatists, was not also the first of English novelists.

It will be necessary to clear the ground by some general definition of the novel and the drama. For this purpose I propose to take the well-known passage from the fifth book of "Meister's Apprenticeship."

"One evening a dispute arose among our friends about the novel and the drama, and which of them deserved the preference. They conversed together long upon the matter; and in fine, the following was nearly the result of their discussion: In the novel as well as in the drama it is human nature and human action that we see. . . . But in the novel it is chiefly *sentiments and events* that are exhibited; in the drama it is *characters and deeds*. The novel must go slowly forward, and the sentiments of the hero, by some means or other, must restrain the tendency of the whole to unfold itself and to conclude. The drama, on the other hand, must hasten, and the character of the hero

¹ An address delivered at the Shakespeare Birthday Dinner, April 23rd, 1894, Anderton's Hotel, London.

must press forward to the end. . . . The novel-hero must be suffering, at least he *must not in a high degree be active*, in the dramatic one, we *must look for activity and deeds.*"

I am not going to discuss this as a theory. I will ask you to accept it as a touchstone by which, to judge of Shakespeare's art, Goethe may be wrong; if so, the greater part of the world is wrong with him. Pretty accurately he expresses the general feeling.

Now if we were asked by a foreigner to give an account of the origin of the English novel, I suppose we should say that, after various trial trips with Sir Philip Sidney, Defoe, and others, it began with Richardson and Fielding. In these two writers it leapt to a great maturity. But it was still very simple in structure; it was still epic, and told its tale precisely as you would tell a tale to a child, beginning "Once upon a time there lived a man."

Then came writers of various merit, and presently a great man, a mighty magician, a wonderful wizard—Walter Scott. Scott did more than write a group of the finest novels in the language; he enlarged the art of fiction. This he did by adding to the epic method the dramatic method. The tale did not begin, "Once upon a time there lived a man." It began, so to speak, "On a certain day, etc., etc., when the sun was dipping over the hill, etc., etc., etc., a solitary horseman might have been seen, etc., etc." You know the way of it. This dropped you down into a story, precisely as a drama does, when the curtain rises and you sit and watch for the plot.

Such is the state of the English novel at the present hour. We have got no further than Scott. A novel, then, at its best, is now a drama written out full length, with scenery and scene-shifting, and music, and the actors' dresses, and the actors' voices, all reproduced in words.

And, now, for a moment, I will ask you to hark back. Let us glance at the origin of the English drama. Its literal origin is lost somewhere in the

mists of the past. We dip into its history at a notable point. It is the period immediately preceding the Elizabethan dramatists. There were plays founded on Italian tales of love, on Spanish voyages, on the death of Julius Cesar, on a Scottish thane who killed his king, on a Danish prince who pretended to be mad, and on a young girl who pretended to be dead. These plays were very rough affairs, and a harum-scarum lot of vagabonds had got tattered copies of them. They acted them in sheds, in the open yards of inns, and in the penny enclosures at country fairs. Of course the great folks did not go to see them, or if they did they were careful to wear masks. The intellectual world, according to its wont, regarded these children of the imagination with great disdain. Bacon knew nothing about such nonsense. But every London 'prentice knew them by heart, and could tell their stories backwards.

And then came along a group of young men of brilliant gifts, but not too much scholarship. One of them was a gravedigger, another had been a bricklayer, a third a butcher, and the ablest of the brotherhood was a country lad, son of a farmer, and nothing else in particular. These boys cast in their lot with the London 'prentice. They took the tattered copies of those old plays, one by one, and transfigured them, put character, and atmosphere, and politics, and religion into them. They had only been boys' stories before, but now they became real dramas. The 'prentices liked them just as much as ever, perhaps rather better, and the great multitude of the people found that they liked them no less. Theatres were then built; the tatterdemalion rascamuffins became a recognized profession, and the English drama was afoot.

But what were the conditions of its existence? They were very primitive. A piece of dramatic writing to be *anything* had to be *everything*. It must not only tell a story, it must criticise it. It must not only present a character, it must tell you if the character was good

or bad. It must not only present a scene, it must describe it. These were necessities forced upon it by the state of its play-houses and the quality of its acting.

The stage, as I understand it, was an open space, probably in the middle of the auditorium. The audience sat about it, some of them on top of it. It appears as if the dress circle of those days was the square margin of the stage itself. Obviously two things that we now have there could not then be. There could not be scenes as we understand them, there could not be scenic illusion, and there could not be acting such as we now call impersonation. It was impossible that the audience should ever forget that the actors were not the characters they represented ; that Bottom was not the lion.

Do you recognize the path by which I am taking you ? I ask you to realize two things : first, that the essential dramatic work was done to Shakespeare's hand. It is not merely that he found his plots provided for him, but that nearly everything that made the dramatic tug of incident or emotion was already fixed and settled in the imagination of his audience. And next, I ask you to realize that what the public of the time expected of Shakespeare, and what he gave them as his own peculiar contribution, was just that quality which we now call novelistic. Shakespeare had to provide what the theatre of his time did not give him. And the first thing he had to provide was scenery. Have you ever noticed the scenery in Shakespeare ? He is always making his own scenery. He makes it as he goes along. In the course of every scene he tells you all about it. He is always making the atmosphere in which his dramatic action has to live. An artist of imagination ought never to be at a loss for Shakespeare's surroundings. For example, it is nearly impossible to go astray with the great scene of the ghost in the first act of Hamlet. You know what it is. It is twelve o'clock ; the air is nipping and eager, there is some wind ; the moon is out, but black

clouds fly across it at intervals, and often it is hidden, and then it flashes forth.

What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again, in complete
steel,
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon ?

Again, in the same play, when the glare and glitter of the play scene is over and the lights are gone, and Hamlet is going to answer his mother's summons, to see the guilty king at his prayers, and finally to encounter the ghost for the second time, mark how Shakespeare prepares the imagination by making his atmosphere : —

'Tis now the very witching time of night ;
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself
breathes out
Contagion to this world.

Then look at Othello coming into the bedchamber that is to be the death-chamber of his bride. The light has been left burning for him, and as he enters his first word tells us where he has come from. He has been walking to and fro under the sky, muttering aloud in his agony, babbling his terrible secret : —

It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul —
Let me not name it to you, you chaste
stars !

Then Macbeth. See him at the moment when he is contemplating the murder of Banquo. Like the ghost in Hamlet, he tells us precisely the time of night, and exactly what sort of night it is : —

Light thickens ; and the crow
Makes wing to the rocky wood ;
Good things of day begin to droop and
drowse ;
While night's black agents to their prey do
rouse.

Then King Lear. He tells us every detail of that great storm on the heath : —

Poor naked wretches, whereso'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads, and unfed
sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, de-
fend you
From seasons such as these ?

And then that loveliest passage, perhaps, in literature, where Lorenzo sits with Jessica in the moonlight and tells her about the stars :—

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank !

Sit, Jessica. Look, how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.

I will only mention one more instance, but it is the most important in all Shakespeare—I mean the dagger scene in Macbeth. Have you ever asked yourself what the dagger scene means? What dramatic business does it do? How does it help forward the action of the play? Don't think me a heretic if I say that that great scene does no dramatic business whatever, and does not help forward the action at all. You know what happens. The king has gone to bed, his grooms are drunk and asleep, the murder has been planned and arranged. We are in the open courtyard of the castle; Macbeth, torch in hand, is crossing it with a servant; he encounters Banquo and his son going to bed. The night is very dark, the moon has gone down, and there are no stars. Banquo and Fleance go off, and Macbeth dismisses the servant :—

Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

Macbeth is left alone in the courtyard under the moonless and starless sky. He is waiting for the bell that is to be his signal to proceed—his assurance that all is ready and waiting—that he may go and find Duncan and stab him in his sleep. There is a dead pause. The dramatic action comes to a stop. The bell is a mere mechanical device to bridge the space. Shakespeare is doing what Goethe says the novelist must always be doing—he is holding the action back. Why? Because the imagination of the spectator is not yet ready; it has to be prepared for what is to come; it has to be put into touch with what is now happening. We are not going to witness the gross

act of that murder, but we are to realize it by anticipation. *We are also to realize the whole horror of the crime in the mind of the man who is to commit it.*

You know what happens. A dagger appears to Macbeth. It seems to float in the air before him. There are gouts of blood on it, and it seems to go before him, to lead him on. As suddenly as it appeared it vanishes.

There's no such thing :
It is the bloody business, which informs
Thus to mine eyes.—Now o'er the one half
world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams
abuse
The curtain'd sleep ; witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings ; and wither'd mur-
der,
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his
stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards
his design
Moves like a ghost. . . .
I go, and it is done ; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

With the ringing of the bell, the play, which has been at a dead stand, begins again. Macbeth goes out. Lady Macbeth enters. Macbeth returns. Then comes the crash.

In this mighty scene there is no drama. There is nothing but atmosphere. Shakespeare is painting the scenery and *doing the actor's business*.

This brings me to my second point. I want to ask you whether you have considered the supernatural in Shakespeare. Have you noticed the essential difference between the supernatural in Shakespeare and in any of his great contemporaries—Webster, for example? The difference is the difference between the method of the drama and the method of the novel. The ghosts in Shakespeare are all, without exception, novelists', not dramatists' agents and instruments. They are all subjective creations. A ghost in Shakespeare exists for and in the central character. It is rarely seen by any one else. The ghost in "Hamlet," for example, though seen by Hamlet's

friends at first, is not so much the ghost of Hamlet's father as the ghost of Hamlet himself.

Take first the ghost in "Julius Cæsar." We are in the camp in the tent of Brutus. Everybody is gone save the boy, and Brutus is alone. The boy plays sleepy music. Brutus has been reading. He turns down the page and puts the book aside. He falls to thinking. The taper burns badly. It grows very dark. Then a shadow comes in. He thinks his eyes are weak and this is an illusion. It is the ghost of Cæsar: —

How ill this taper burns ! Ha ! who comes here ?

I think it is the weakness of mine eyes
That shapes this monstrous apparition.
It comes upon me ! — Art thou anything ?
Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil,

That mak'st my blood cold, and my hair to stare ?

Speak to me ; what thou art ?

And the ghost answers : —

Thy evil spirit, Brutus.

Then take Macbeth. Consider the ghost of Banquo in the banqueting scene. Is that a great scene ? Assuredly it is. But wherein lies its greatness ? In the force of its drama, in the tug of its incident ? I think not. Its strength lies in its overwhelming revelation of the workings of the soul of a guilty man — in short, in its great qualities as analytical fiction. What happens ? Macbeth is king. We are in a room of state in the palace. A banquet is spread. Lords and attendants enter. Lady Macbeth takes her seat of state. Macbeth does not sit down. He intends to play the humble host and wait upon his guests. His chair is empty. In the midst of the feast a man comes to a side door. There is blood on his face. He tells Macbeth that at his order he has killed Banquo. Lady Macbeth calls to the king to sit down with his guests. He steps forward, looks round and sees the tables full. No, they say, here's a place reserved, and point to the king's empty chair. Macbeth looks at the

chair and thinks he sees Banquo sitting in it. Banquo is dead. This must be Banquo's ghost. His locks are gory ; he is shaking his head at Macbeth.

Which of you have done this ?

What, my good lord ?

Prythee, see there ! behold ! look !

The ghost disappears. Macbeth is his own man again. He calls for wine, and is about to drink to the general joy of the whole table, —

And to our dear friend, Banquo, whom we miss ;
Would he were here ! to all, and him, we thirst,
And all to all.

But the ghost rises again and glares upon him. The banquet is broken up. The lords go home, and Lady Macbeth says, " You lack the season of all natures — sleep." And he answers : —

Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse

Is the initiate fear, that wants hard use :
We are yet but young indeed.

That's all. Nothing happens. Nothing comes of the scene. It begins with nothing ; it ends with nothing ; it leads to nothing, unless it is the next visit to the witches. There is absolutely no drama in it. But if there is no drama, there is something else ; there is great fiction. It is great novel-writing, the very greatest novel-writing. The dramatist is looking into the very soul of Macbeth.

Then take Hamlet. One of the greatest scenes in "Hamlet," if not quite the greatest, is the closet scene. But is it dramatic ? No more dramatic than the banquet scene in "Macbeth." Let us sketch the play. A young prince has newly returned from the university. He finds that his father (the king) has died suddenly and unexpectedly, and that his mother (the queen) has married his uncle and succeeded to the crown. The two facts puzzle and trouble him. He begins to brood over them, and does not know what to understand. In his room, among his books — so I follow the author's mental processes — the prince

begins to suspect foul play. He fancies a spirit appears to him, the spirit of his father. The spirit tells him that his father has been murdered by his uncle. It describes the murder. He vows to be revenged. The spirit justifies the vow. All this at night and before the glow-worm pales its light in the morning. When day comes, and as day follows day, he begins to doubt. This has been an evil dream, a morbid fancy put into his head by evil powers. He will have more relevant evidence. So he conceives of a trap to catch the king if the king is guilty. He calls it the mouse-trap. It is a play whereof one incident comes very near to what the ghost told him of the murder of his father. He has the play performed before the king, and he watches the king's face. The king shows uneasiness. At the critical moment he pretends to be ill and leaves the entertainment. Hamlet is sure now; he will take the word of the ghost for a thousand pounds. But why doesn't he go on? Why doesn't he kill the king? Why? Because Shakespeare is doing what the novelist must do—he is holding the action back. The play is waiting. What is it waiting for? It is waiting for Shakespeare the novelist. We have to be told what is going on in Hamlet's own mind—a thing that has very little to do with the dramatic action of the moment. The queen sends for Hamlet to her closet. He goes to her, passing through the open courtyard under the stars, and past the chapel where the guilty man is alone, kneeling at his prayers:—

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven.

When he reaches the queen's chamber he speaks daggers to her. That will not help his revenge. He is only unpacking his heart with words. In the midst of his outburst he stops suddenly and glares at vacancy. The queen looks at him and thinks he is mad. But something has appeared to him. It is the ghost. It has come to chide him for letting his opportunities go by, and wasting himself in the very rags of passion.

Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?

And the ghost answers:—

Do not forget: this visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.

Well, what comes of this tremendous, this magnificent scene? Nothing comes of it. Nothing, at least, that is on the main lines of the interest. The catastrophe is worked out by an accident in the course of the scene. Polonius is killed, Ophelia dies, Laertes comes home, Laertes kills Hamlet, and Hamlet kills the king. But so far as concerns the great current of interest flowing from the ghost's revelation of the crime, the scene comes to a most impotent conclusion. The king has decided to ship Hamlet to England, and Hamlet is willing to be shipped off:—

I must to England.

He is thinking how he will defeat the schemes of his two false friends. That's all. But the murder of his father, the ghost's message, his vow of revenge, where are they? Regarded from the point of pure drama, the management of plot is almost enough to justify the worst criticisms of the French critics.

Nevertheless, this colossal, this marvellous, this miraculous piece of imaginative art is not thrown away. It has helped us to "turn our eyes into the very soul" of Hamlet. And there we have Shakespeare the novelist. Shakespeare the dramatist may have been at fault, but Shakespeare the novelist has been transcendent.

I wish it were possible to speak of Othello, and show how Iago, who really does nothing of himself, is the novelist's machine to reveal the mind of the Moor. Iago is the ghost in "Othello." The only vital incident in which he touches the actual is the incident of the handkerchief. Try to believe that I speak with profound reverence when I say that as a dramatic episode nothing in the world could be more primitive than that.

Watch it. Desdemona takes the handkerchief out for Othello's headache ; Othello pushes it aside and lets it drop ; Emilia picks it up ; Iago snatches it from her and throws it in at the window of Cassio's lodging ; Cassio gives it to his mistress ; and then Iago brings Othello to see the mistress wearing it. Could anything be more artificial as a material structure ? That is the story of the handkerchief from the point of Shakespeare the dramatist. But look how different it is from the point of Shakespeare the novelist. Othello had that handkerchief from his mother. A superstitious reverence attaches to it. He gives it to his wife as the dearest thing he possesses. Suddenly he realizes that she prizes it so little that it is lying in the very mud. Then all his soul rises. Moreover, his superstitious are up in arms. Thus, as a spiritual agent, the handkerchief is sublime. As a material agent it is next thing to ridiculous. And the difference is the difference between Shakespeare the novelist and Shakespeare the dramatist. Thus, I say that, however great Shakespeare may be in the qualities that are essentially of the drama, he is yet greater in the qualities that are essentially of the novel.

But there is a yet more practical consideration, without which it would not have been worth while to go delving for the novelist in the dramatist. I believe the fact that the novelist was in Shakespeare, and in the other Elizabethan dramatists was the very sheet-anchor of dramatic literature. In the days when the author was everything — author, scene-painter, and half-actor as well — the drama was free. Is it free now ? I'm afraid it has been sold into slavery to the upholsterer and the milliner. The productions of the modern stage are magnificent. We owe the actors a great debt for the magnificent realizations of Shakespearian plays, but is it not possible that we are paying too dear for them ? One of the necessities of a magnificent production is, that a piece shall have a long run. Is that favorable to the growth of the drama ? Assuredly it would not foster

another Webster. The world would have no room for his two hundred plays. Even Shakespeare himself, with his shorter tale of thirty odd plays, would keep two theatres going for nearly twenty years if each ran two or three hundred nights. Some of his contemporaries, under like conditions, would want a career lasting a century. And if you consider it on its most matter-of-fact basis, the Elizabethan drama in mere bulk could not exist on the Victorian stage. We lament the decay of the English drama since the golden days, but if we had it back we could not entertain it. Our altered conditions, notwithstanding our many theatres, give too little accommodation.

Another of the effects of a magnificent production is that of increasing the risk of failure. Surely anything that does that is injurious to the growth of art. Art lives and thrives in an atmosphere of absolute independence of material things. Every responsibility with which you load it is a shackle that interferes with its growth and with its liberty of action. Now, is it not conceivable that we should have more of the native drama if the risk of trying examples of it were not so great ? Do you answer that no great play is ever lost to the stage ; that the actors know their business ; that it would be weakness to bewail the great unacted ? That is not my point. I am putting in no plea for the army of would-be dramatists, with dramas in their tail-pockets. I am rather urging the cause of the tried, acknowledged, or successful dramatist. Is he a free man ? Assuredly he is not. Could he give us of his very best, apart from all considerations that are not artistic ? Indeed no. And what are the chief trammels to the exercise of his gift ? I think they are two. First, the enormous and increasing material cost of a dramatic production ; and, second (I say it with all deference, all respect to an honorable profession), the domination of the actor in the theatre.

As to the first point. Surely the actor as well as the author would find

his account in a much simpler condition of the stage. The terrors of bankruptcy would not so frequently beset him. A year and a half ago I lunched with a well-known dramatist on the eve of the production of a piece that is now very famous.

"Is it going to be a popular success?" I asked.

"I don't know; I don't think so," he answered.

"Then, I suppose," I said, "that when a dramatist has reached your position on the stage he can do what he likes."

"By no means," he replied. "I have to think of the box office perpetually. The production of a play is a costly thing nowadays, and the running of a company is expensive. I am never allowed to forget that. There lies the difference between a dramatist and a novelist. The novelist loses nothing but his labor, his publisher loses nothing but his printer's bill. That is risk enough for a work of art. But the dramatist has to remember his manager's leases and contracts. The novelist can think of himself first. The dramatist must think of himself last."

"That's bad," I said. "Don't you think it must have an evil effect on the drama as a literature?"

"Assuredly," he said. "It is one of the penalties we pay for our present condition."

I must not attempt to saddle our friend with any responsibility for my conclusion, which is, that if magnificent stage appointments are drags on dramatic activity, we are paying vastly too dear for them. What are we doing? We are taking the productions of the stage carpenter instead of the productions of Mr. Pinero, the productions of the milliner instead of the productions of Mr. Jones.

As to the second point. That the actor is now the dominant figure in the theatre will hardly be questioned. Has it always been so? I think not. It could not have been so in England in the days of Shakespeare, or in Spain in the days of Calderon, or in France

in the days of Molière. The author was then the master of the play-house. And the author ought to be the master of the play-house still. That position is his birthright. He has always held it when the drama has been at its best. He will hold it again before the drama comes by its own. He lost his supremacy in England about the time of Garrick. That was the moment when actors were turning back to Shakespeare with new lights. They were not going to be reciters any longer; they were going to be impersonators. Has the rule of the actor been entirely good for the theatre? I believe it has been very good for the art of acting. I doubt if there can ever have been such acting as the past hundred years have produced. But has it been so good for the literature of the drama? I think not. I don't say that the interests of actor and author conflict, but I do say they are not identical. At all events, the best days of the drama were those in which Shakespeare did actor's work as well as scene-painter's; when, in short, he was the novelist as well as the dramatist.

But what would Shakespeare be if he were living now? Would he be dramatist or novelist? Most certainly he would be both. In his dramas we should miss his splendid touches of scene, his all-permeating atmosphere — Mr. Hawes Craven would do a good deal of that for him. We should also miss some of his introspective touches — Mr. Irving would help him to dispense with them. We should miss his ghosts altogether.

He would accommodate himself to our time, just as he did to his own. Obviously there never lived a saner and more business-like person than Shakespeare. He ran his head against no hard walls of life, no stubborn facts of his time. All art is of the nature of a compromise, and some of Shakespeare's compromises appear to have been sufficiently liberal. If he were living now I think he would write melodramas for the Adelphi. Why not? He wrote the play scene in "Hamlet." He would write fairy comedy for the

Gaiety. Why not? He wrote "Midsummer Night's Dream." He would write farcical comedy for the Vaudeville. Why not? He wrote the "Comedy of Errors." He would write another "Much Ado" for the Lyceum, and another "Henry" for Drury Lane.

Shakespeare would, of course, be a dramatist, but it is hardly conceivable that he would not be a novelist also. He would want his say on the great questions of life and he would find that these are not usually discussed on the stage in our day. He would find that the only place where we do not utterly fight shy of the greater life problems is the novel. I should be sorry to see the theatre turned into a dissecting-room. I want to see it kept as a play-house for the people. Let it be a breezy, wholesome play-house. But that isn't to say that it need be a general play-ground. The spirit of our own time seems determined to make it so. Aren't we gravitating towards the music-hall? I don't complain that we are not discussing incest with Ibsen in "Ghosts;" I don't complain that we are not exhibiting the neurotic woman with the clever ladies who are now besieging the libraries; but I do complain that on the stage of to-day we fight shy of nearly all great passions. They trouble us too much; we don't want to feel deeply. We dine just before we go to the theatre. That material fact is not altogether a hopeful sign for the higher drama. And so strong passions, banished from the stage, have taken refuge in the novel. Shakespeare would find his account there. I don't say that Shakespeare would be a Zola, but there would be the Zola in him. I don't say that he would be a Tolstoi, but there would be the Tolstoi in him too. The serious issues which he put into Macbeth, and Othello, and Lear, because there was no other vehicle, and because the temper of his time was favorable to great passions on the stage, he would put into great novels if he were living now.

But why do I say if he were living now? He is living now. There is no

one so much alive. I have talked of the supernatural in Shakespeare. The most supernatural thing in Shakespeare is Shakespeare himself. I have spoken of the ghosts of Shakespeare. Shakespeare's own ghost is constantly with us. It is helping us to write our plays and our stories. It is helping us to edit our newspapers. No need to think of a visible presence. We feel the spirit that is so much more potent. And if the mind goes back to the bodily figure of the man as he walked the world, we feel that we know it. The sweet, strong, cheerful Englishman, the greatest of our countrymen, fond of good company, of liberal giving, of generous living, of troops of friends—he is with us still. HALL CAINE.

From Blackwood's Magazine.
THE DOUBLE-BEDDED ROOM.

SOME of us said that our friend Cecil Wake was the most nervous man they had ever known. And yet his health seemed always good, although the susceptibility of his temperament was such that it appeared as though the wear and tear of existence must soon prove too much for him. He was temperate—very temperate—and yet the amount of twitching that his facial muscles underwent when he was moved and excited, made one fear that the next thing he would do must be to weep. Circumstances that did not affect other men produced an amount of moisture, especially in the corner of his right eye, which soon culminated in an actual tear-drop, always hastily brushed away before it fell. The Germans, in whose country he had been for some years of his youth, have a saying of such a man that "he is built near the water." Now emotion on certain occasions is always permissible, even to the male sex. When, for instance, a favorite daughter or niece is married, the "God bless you!" uttered by the master of the deserted home is apt to be gutturally, and even chokingly,—nay, often inarticulately,—expressed. Perhaps it has been observed by those

who do not go down themselves to the sea in ships, but who like to see a ship launched for the purposes of those who intend to inflict on themselves such discomfort, that when the said ship is launched, men among the crowd of witnesses of the operation blow their noses, and their eyes become watery. Cecil Wake's always became watery on such occasions. The cheering of the men on board of a ship of war, the march past of troops, even the hurrying of firemen to a conflagration, made his vision very misty. Some said that this was to the credit of his heart—others said it was not to the credit of his nerves. Did he ride? Yes, sometimes, and well. The successful termination of a fox-hunt and the tragic death of the fox were events which were alleged by gossips to produce much the same effect upon him as the above-mentioned cases of marriage, launching, cheering, or fire-extinguishing; but then fox-hunting takes place when the air is cold and eyes are apt to be moist from intense sympathy with an east wind. Nothing tangible on the nerve subject could be fairly deduced from such evidence. What are nerves? Nobody knows. Husbands swear that they are rubbish. Wives declare that their whole being consists of nothing else. What is certain is that they sometimes show themselves, or rather their influence shows itself, all of a sudden. A danger is laughed at and defied; but in a moment, although the danger may not be there, the mere imagination that it is present makes us feel uncomfortable. The boldest men are not always quite sure of themselves. One, a general, who had faced fire over and over again, laughed at the idea that he could feel anxious when taken down a steep ice toboggan slope. "Me? No, never felt nervous in my life;" and he took his place in front of the person who was to steer him down the ice. But he had hardly seated himself before he felt an irresistible impulse not to go forward, but to hang back. "Stop one moment,—are you quite sure you can steer?" was the question in which his

nerves unexpectedly betrayed themselves. We truly do not know what is going on within us, and it would not surprise any doctor to be told confidentially by any one that a discovery had been made that the nerves were giving way. Imagination has a great responsibility in these matters. Men of little imagination are not "given to give way." So, if you have to do anything which is trying, and require an assistant or companion, don't take a man endowed with imagination. Look rather for a fool than a clever man. At all events, do not attempt anything risky with a man who thinks too much.

All these sapient thoughts arise because of Cecil Wake, who, although an excellent fellow, thought too much. Perhaps it was because of this that he had become better than any barometer for telling a change in weather. Snow always gave him headache—thunder always gave him headache; but he bore these afflictions uncomplainingly. But we knew in summer from an extra twitch about his mouth that we should have thundery weather. In winter snow faithfully followed the same signals. We discovered another peculiarity in him, and some of his friends declared that they had found a treasure in him at last, because he had one gift that could be usefully employed for money. He was a marvellous water-finder. For this he employed the time-honored instrument, the hazel fork. He held the two ends of the hazel between his thumb and forefinger, the fork turned downwards, and whenever he came anywhere near running water the fork end of the hazel rose in the air; and the stick not only did this, but twisted and turned in his hand as though in an agony. It made his arms ache, he said, and he described the sensation as especially unpleasant along the nerves and muscles of the forearms. In an African desert he would have been invaluable; and we often told him that one of the African companies should give him a salary and employ him to find water in dry places. When he walked with us, often and often he has told us that

water ran somewhere far down under his feet. We believed him or disbelieved him as we liked, for it was only when we knew that a stream was close at hand that we could test him. He had also a sensation when placed near certain metals. Whether all this arose from magnetism or from some electrical affinities, we were not wise enough to determine. To electricity I ascribed his sensitiveness; others called it by other names. At all events, there it was, a most palpable fact, showing itself with a power so strong that if, for instance, he grasped our wrists, we became aware of a force running into our being; and it lifted hazel-twigs in our hands when he was thus holding us, so that we felt the wood pressing itself against our fingers if we resisted the impulse given to it by him through our bodies.

Why should persons formed exactly alike as far as the mere presence of blood, bone, sinew, and nerves is concerned, be so variously affected? If there be such great forces at work, why do they not pervade all sentient flesh? We ask many questions, but the true replies are not as yet vouchsafed to us; perhaps they will never be. There will always be creatures whose eyes see, and ears hear, what is unknown to the many. The presence of influences in the world around us will thrill through those who, endowed with ethereal qualities, feel things which most of us, fashioned with more earthly substance, failed to discern.

Notwithstanding his exquisite susceptibility, Wake was a pleasant companion, and did not take amiss any amusement afforded to his grosser comrades by his peculiarities. He was fond of making excursions on foot through the Swiss highlands; and one companion only was what he asked and generally obtained, for we all liked him, and he was easily pleased. Content with almost anything except constant noise or stormy weather, he would plod along, singing sometimes to himself, and full of interest in all he saw. The only circumstance that made him seem at all unreasonable was

in the matter of accommodation at an inn. The hotels were often crowded; but however full they might be, Wake always insisted on having a room to himself. He said he could not sleep with another person snoring in another bed, however remote, in the same room.

This unreasonable apprehension was especially aggravating when I was with him on one of these excursions, for I am an excellent walker, and an excellent sleeper, and feel certain that I never snore. People don't who lie on their side and not on their back, and I know that I never lie on my back; and if ever disagreeable, I am only disagreeable when I am awake. But this assertion had no influence with Cecil Wake. We had arrived late and hungry at an inn, and were shown a room where there were two beds, the one with its back to the side of the room where was the window, and the other placed with its head the other way, and near the door. There was a considerable interval between the beds. Wake told the landlord he wanted a room to himself, however small. Excellent as Swiss hotels are, they cannot contain more rooms than they do contain, and the landlord said he could not give another unless he gave his own, and that he could not do, for he had a wife and I don't know how many children sleeping there. So there was no help for it, and the landlord retired. I told Wake that I feared there was no avoiding the inconvenience, and that he must allow me a bed, and that I promised not to snore. But although at first he made no demur, and although I had my bag carried up to the room, he presently began to look so unhappy — so ridiculously put out and twitchy — that I, to whom it was a matter of perfect indifference whether I slept in a bed or on a sofa, said that I had made up my mind not to plague him by my presence, and that I would go down and sleep on a couch I had observed in the dining-room of the hotel, which we had passed as we came in before mounting the stairs. He thanked me effusively, and although I thought him rather self-

ish I shook his hand and wished him pleasant dreams. He said that he would not act thus were it not that he felt that he himself would be an annoyance to me ; for unless he slept well, his restlessness would be sufficient to keep us both awake.

"Besides," he added, to my astonishment, "there are very peculiar influences at work here, and especially, as it seems to me, in that part of the room where your bed" (indicating the one near the door) "is placed, and I would much rather that no friend of mine slept there. I cannot tell you what it is, but it is palpable — palpable," he repeated with a sigh and a shudder, "and I shall certainly take the bed near the window, where I can get fresh air."

I said, "Nonsense, old man ; thunder in the air, and on your nerves, as usual. Nice clean bed — what's the matter with it ?" But as I said this, a draught coming from the door blew out my candle, and made his flicker so that he shaded it with his hand, causing the shadow of the hand to fall on that side of the room where the door and the bed were, and I looked, and while I was speaking the shadow of his fingers above the bed seemed to make them point on the wall at something, and underneath the shadow of them the bed appeared to my fancy to be shining in an odd way. Waves of phosphorescence, like that seen in the sky when it is lit by auroral light, floated over it, and illuminated the white sheets. I hastily lit my candle again at his, and repeating my good-night, went out at the door, an odd, chilly sensation passing down my back as I did so. I found the couch in the dining-room, lay down on it, put my plaid over my legs, and was soon sound asleep.

During the early hours of morning there must have been a storm which failed to wake me. As it came nearer, however, I became half conscious, and my thoughts taking pleasant shapes, made me in my dream imagine myself at breakfast with Wake, preparatory to a start for a mountain ramble. I saw before me on the clean table-cloth the

low glass jar of the inevitable Swiss honey, and my mouth seemed filled with the excellent bread and butter, and I lifted to my lips the cup of *café au lait*, but a sudden jar made me drop the cup, and with a start I awoke. A loud peal of thunder shook the hotel, and I lay on my back thinking what would happen were the lightning to strike the house. The position of Wake's room immediately over the dining-room occurred to me. I ran over in my mind the construction of the place, its verandahs, and its many windows under the tall roof which had a great gable. I wondered if there was a lightning-conductor, and thought how the chimney was placed, and if the stories of bolts coming down chimneys were true. Pah ! what nonsense ! Why should I have such ideas ? Let me go to sleep again. What did it matter, one thunder-storm or more among the Alps, which were always re-echoing such concerts ? Then I looked round me, and I saw the door I had entered by slowly open, and in another moment Wake's face appeared, then his body followed, clothed in his dressing-gown.

"Are you here, D—— ?" he asked.

"Yes, yes, here I am, quite comfortable," I replied, thinking lazily that he might have suddenly become uneasy about my accommodation. "Here I am, woke by this beastly thunderstorm. I suppose it woke you."

He came to me without answering, and by a night-light I had kept burning I saw that he looked much disturbed.

"Never mind me now," I said ; "I am all right. What is it that has disturbed you ?"

He was silent a moment, and then said in quick, whispered tones, "I want you to come with me."

"Where to ?" I asked.

"Up to my room. I wish to see if you see what I see there. Come at once."

I was still feeling very lazy, but felt that he was in earnest, and rolled out of the sofa with a grunt, saying "All right, old man ; anything to please

you." Then as I followed his retreating figure, I asked, "But what is it?"

"Never mind, come—come," he said, and we re-entered the bedroom.

He had a candle burning beside the bed he had occupied, the one near the window. The other bed, next the door, had evidently remained untouched. There was no sign of any pressure on the pillow, nor was there any disturbance of the blankets and sheets. As I passed to the interior of the room I again felt chilly for a moment. We approached the window, which was seamed with the beating rain. Wake faced round and asked me to look at the bed near the door.

"Can you see anything there?" he asked.

"Why, no, the bed—what do you mean?" I replied.

"Wait," he said, "for the next flash, and then tell me what you see, keeping your eyes on the bed," he added excitedly, but in a low and, as it appeared to me, fear-struck voice.

We waited, but not for long, for very soon a fierce light beat in again, as the lightning ran down, illuminating every corner of the room, and showing the white unruffled bed most distinctly.

"Now—and now—there!" Wake exclaimed.

"Well, all is dark, except for your candlelight, which seems weak and yellow enough after that flash," I said loudly; for the thunder had pealed out as soon as the flash disappeared, and rolled on with its reverberations as though the sound would never cease.

"Look at them—you must see that group around him," Cecil said. "No—you don't. Well, wait for the next flash."

"What is it?" I asked; and feeling a little faint, which I had hardly ever felt before, I sat down on the bed on which he had reposed. He sat down on it also, seating himself more towards its foot, as I had placed myself next the pillows. His body was thus between me and the other bed. He took my hand, then seeing that I rather shrank from this childlike treatment,

he put his hand on my arm, and said, "Hush—do wait, and see again if you see nothing."

So we watched, the rain making its noise against the window. I whispered, "Do you see anything that you keep on telling me to watch, and looking so oddly always at the corner?"

"Yes, I see them still, but fainter," he replied.

Then came another blinding flame of blue light, and I—I, looking at that empty bed, saw upon it the form of a man, and around him was gathered a group of figures, half seen, but lighted with the light that had filled the room with the flash, and had gone again—there it was, lingering still on that form in the bed, and lighting up the side of the figures around him. The figure on the bed was that of a dead man, but although the corpse was phosphorescent, under the half-closed lids the eyes gleamed as though their blind orbs were of living fire. The glow coming from him seemed to be the radiance that lighted the sorrowing group that gazed down upon him. As I looked the apparition became fainter and fainter, until the little yellow candle-flame was all that lit the room, and the bed again was empty, and the white sheets lay close up to the pillow next to the wall as though nothing had ever been there. I now felt my arm aching where Wake's hand was on it, and I moved it and gently displaced his hand with my disengaged one, and said, "Wake, I thought I saw a group of men around a body in that bed, but is must be some odd effect of the lightning playing tricks with reflections from that mirror!"

"You think so?" he said, with a sad smile that softened the twitchings of the corners of his mouth. "Well, if you stay, you may see it again,—I see it now."

"But I don't, and it's all nonsense," I said desperately, determined not to give in; "but I'll tell you what it is, Cecil, I'll not leave the room. Give us a hand with your own bed. I'll take the feathered cushion thing and a blanket, and lie near you until morn-

ing, and that bed may take care of itself. I agree so far with you that I won't sleep in it."

The storm was moving farther away. There were some fainter flashes, but I saw nothing of our strangely lit companions, and after tossing about on the improvised bed on the floor, and seeing Cecil still half-raised on his pillows and gazing still at bed No. 2, I became unconscious of storm, Cecil, or phantoms, and slept till the morning light, and the boot's cheerful "*Sechs Uhr*" and double knock warned us to prepare for our day's work. Cecil rose, and we went together down to the dining-room, both very silent, and wondering if anything would be asked by host or waiters about our night's rest. We breakfasted, the host came and wished us good-morning, and gave information about our route, and spoke of the storm, but of nothing else, and I turned to Cecil after he had gone, saying that I could not explain the night's vision, but thought we must have eaten something that had produced a disagreement in our digestions and an agreement in our symptoms. He was still excited and nervous, and looked as though he had not slept at all.

"I am sorry I called you," he said amiably.

"Oh, we had best not talk of the effect of light we thought we saw, and it's of no use to mention it to others," I replied.

"Why?" he asked.

"Simply," I said, "because nobody will believe us."

We left the hotel, and I think it must have been at least a week afterwards that in another hotel we came upon a number of an old illustrated newspaper in the reading-room. Cecil had it in his hand, and gave it to me, pointing with his finger at a paragraph which read thus:—

"We regret to learn that a sad accident took place last Wednesday at —gen, the particulars of which have cast a gloom over the place, and have so affected the amiable host of the —hoff, that he has shut up his house a full fortnight before the usual end of

the season, which has always filled full his hospitable and excellent place of entertainment and healthy lodging. Mr. G., an English gentleman, who was travelling alone, was carried into the hotel during a thunderstorm, struck dead by lightning, which damaged also a little part of the house, close to which he was standing under the shelter of a chestnut-tree. The body was placed on a bed, and means were tried to produce sensibility, but without avail. His brother has arrived from England, and the corpse will probably be buried at —gen, his brother thinking that the carriage to England of the gentleman's body is unnecessary, although he has, it is said, a fine estate in that country, and might have expected to have ended his life amid English 'home and comfort,' and to have rested with his ancestors."

I put down the paper.

The place mentioned was that where Cecil Wake had caused me to see what, I still try to think, was an effect of his own imagination.

AN ELECTRICIAN.

From Macmillan's Magazine,
RAVENNA AND HER GHOSTS.

MY oldest impression of Ravenna, before it became in my eyes the abode of living friends as well as of outlandish ghosts, is of a melancholy spring sunset at Classe.

Classe, which Dante and Boccaccio call in less Latin fashion Chiassi, is the place where of old the fleet (*classis*) of the Romans and Ostrogoths rode at anchor in the Adriatic. It is represented in the mosaic of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, dating from the reign of Theodoric, by a fine city wall of gold tesserae (facing the representation of Theodoric's town palace with the looped-up embroidered curtains) and a strip of ultramarine sea, with two rowing boats and one white blown-out sail upon it. Ravenna, which is now an inland town, was at that time built in a lagoon; and we must picture Classe in much the same relation to it that

Malamocco or the port of Lido is to Venice ; the open sea-harbor, where big ships and flotillas were stationed, while smaller craft wound through the channels and sandbanks up to the city. But now the lagoon has dried up, the Adriatic has receded, and there remains of Classe not a stone, save, in the midst of stagnant canals, rice-marsh, and brown bogland, a gaunt and desolate church, with a ruinous mildewed house and a crevassed round tower by its side.

It seemed to me that first time, and has ever since seemed, no Christian church, but the temple of the great Roman goddess Fever. The gates stood open, as they do all day lest inner damp consume the building, and a beam from the low sun slanted across the oozy brown nave, and struck a round spot of glittering green, on the mosaic of the apse. There, in the half-dome, stood rows and rows of lambs, each with its little tree and lilies, shining out white from the brilliant green grass of Paradise, great streams of gold and blue circling around them, and widening overhead into lakes of peacock splendor. The slanting sunbeam which burnished that spot of mosaic fell also across the altar steps, brown and green in their wet mildew like the ceiling above. The floor of the church, sunk below the level of the road, was as a piece of boggy ground, leaving the feet damp, and breathing a clammy horror on the air. Outside, the sun was setting behind a bank of solid grey clouds, faintly reddening their rifts and sending a few rose-colored streaks into the pure yellow evening sky. Against that sky stood out the long russet line, the delicate cupola'd silhouette of the sear pine wood recently blasted by frost. On the other side the marsh stretched out beyond sight, confused in the distance with grey clouds, its lines of bare spectral poplars picked out upon its green and the greyness of the sky. All round the church lay brown grass, livid pools, green rice-fields, covered with clear water reflecting the red sunset streaks ; and overhead, driven by

storms from the sea, circled the white gulls ; ghosts, you might think, of the white-sailed galleys of Theodoric still haunting the harbor of Classis.

Since then, as I hinted, Ravenna has become the home of dear friends, to which I periodically return, in autumn or winter or blazing summer, without taking thought for any of the ghosts. And the impressions of Ravenna are mainly those of life ; the voices of children, the plans of farmers, the squabbles of local politics. I am waked in the morning by the noises of the market, and, opening my shutters, look down upon green umbrellas, and awnings spread over baskets of fruit and vegetables, and heaps of ironware, and stalls of colored stuffs and gaudy kerchiefs. The streets are by no means empty. A steam tramcar puffs slowly along the widest of them ; and in the narrower you have perpetually to squeeze against a house to make room for a clattering pony-cart, a jingling carriole, or one of those splendid bullock-wagons, shaped like an old-fashioned cannon-cart with spokeless wheels and metal studdings. There are no mediæval churches in Ravenna, and very few mediæval houses. The older palaces, though practically fortified, have a vague look of Roman villas ; and the whole town is painted a delicate rose and apricot color, which, particularly if you have come from the sad-colored cities of Tuscany, gives it a Venetian and (if I may say so) chintz-petticoat, flowered-kerchief cheerfulness. And the life of the people, when you come in contact with it, also leaves an impression of provincial, rustic bustle. The Romagnas are full of crude socialism. The change from rice to wheat-growing has produced agricultural discontent ; and conspiracy has been in the blood of these people ever since Dante answered the Romagnolo Guido that his country would never have peace in its heart. The ghosts of Byzantine emperors and arches, of Gothic kings and mediæval tyrants, must be laid, one would think, by socialist meetings and electioneering squabbles ; and, perhaps, by another

movement, as modern and as revolutionary, which also centres in this big historical village, the reclaiming of marshland, which may bring about changes in mode of living and thinking such as socialism can never succeed in ; nay, for all one knows, changes in climate, in sea, and wind, and clouds. *Bonification*, reclaiming, that is the great word in Ravenna ; and I had scarcely arrived last autumn, before I found myself whirled off, among dog-carts and *chars à bancs*, to view reclaimed land in the cloudless, pale-blue, ice-cold weather. On we trotted, with a great consulting of maps and discussing of expenses and production, through the flat green fields and meadows marked with haystacks ; jolting along a deep sandy track, all that remains of the Roméa, the pilgrims' way from Venice to Rome, where marsh and pool begin to interrupt the well-kept pastures, and the line of pine woods to come nearer and nearer. Over the fields, the frequent canals, and hidden ponds circled gulls and wild fowl ; and at every farm there was a little crowd of pony-carts and of gaitered sportsmen returning from the marshes. A sense of reality, of the present, of useful, bread-giving, fever-curing activity, came by sympathy, as I listened to the chatter of my friends and saw field after field, farm after farm, pointed out where, but a while ago, only swamp grass and bushes grew, and cranes and wild duck nested. In ten, twenty, fifty years, they went on calculating, Ravenna will be able to diminish by so much the town-rates ; the Romagnas will be able to support so many more thousands of inhabitants merely by employing the rivers to deposit arable soil torn from the mountain valleys ; the rivers — Po and his followers, as Dante called them — which have so long turned this country into marsh ; the rivers which in a thousand years cut off Ravenna from her sea.

We returned home, greedy for tea, and mightily in conceit with progress. But before us, at a turn of the road, appeared Ravenna, its towers and cupolas against a bank of clouds, a

piled-up heap of sunset fire ; its canal, barred with flame, leading into its black vagueness, a spectre city. And there, to the left, among the bare trees, loomed the great round tomb of Theodoric. We jingled on, silent and overcome by the deathly December chill.

That is the odd thing about Ravenna. It is, more than any of the Tuscan towns, more than most of the Lombard ones, modern, full of rough, dull, modern life ; and the past which haunts it comes from so far off, from a world with which we have no contact. Those pillared basilicas, which look like modern village churches from the street, with their almost Moorish arches, their enamelled splendor of many colored mosaics, their lily fields and peacocks' tails in mosque-like domes, affect one as great stranded hulks come floating across Eastern seas and drifted ashore among the marsh and rice-fields. The grapes and ivy berries, the pouting pigeons, the palm-trees and pecking peacocks, all this early symbolism with its association of Bacchic, Eleusinian mysteries, seems quite as much as the actual fragments of Grecian capitals, the discs and gratings of porphyry and alabaster, so much flotsam and jetsam cast up from the shipwreck of an older antiquity than Rome's ; remnants of early Hellas, of Ionia, perhaps of Tyre.

I used to feel this particularly in Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, or, as it is usually called, *Classe Dentro*, the long basilica built by Theodoric, outrivalled later by Justinian's octagon church of Saint Vitalis. There is something extremely Hellenic in feeling (however un-Grecian in form) in the pearly fairness of the delicate silvery white columns and capitals ; in the gleam of white on golden ground, and, reticulated with jewels and embroideries, of the long band of mosaic virgins and martyrs running above them. The virgins, with their Byzantine names — Sancta Anastasia, Sancta Anatolia, Sancta Eulalia, Sancta Euphemia — have big kohl'd eyes and embroidered garments, fantastically suggesting some Eastern hieratic dancing-girl ; but they

follow each other in single file (each with her lily or rose-bush sprouting from the green mosaic), with erect, slightly balanced gait, like the maidens of the Panathenaic procession, carrying, one would say, votive offerings to the altar, rather than crowns of martyrdom ; all stately, sedate, as if drilled by some priestly ballet-master ; all with the same wide eyes and set smile as of early Greek sculpture. There is no attempt to distinguish one from the other. There are no gaping wounds, tragic attitudes, wheels, swords, pincers, or other attributes of martyrdom. And the male saints on the wall opposite are equally unlike mediæval Sebastians and Lawrences, going, one behind the other, in shining white togas, to present their crowns to Christ on his throne. Christ also, in this Byzantine art, is never the Saviour. He sits, an angel on each side, on his golden seat, clad in purple and sandalled with gold, serene, beardless, wide-eyed, like some distant descendant of the Olympic Jove.

This church of Saint Apollinaris contains a chapel specially dedicated to the saint, which sums up that curious impression of Hellenic, pre-Christian cheerfulness. It is encrusted with porphyry and *giallo antico*, framed with delicate carved ivy wreaths along the sides, and railed in with an exquisite piece of alabaster openwork of vines and grapes, as on an antique altar. And in a corner of this little temple, which seems to be waiting for some painter enamoured of Greece and marble, stands the episcopal seat of the patron saint of the church, the saint who took his name from Apollo ; an alabaster seat, wide-curved and delicate, in whose back you expect to find, so striking is the resemblance, the relief of dancing satyrs of the chair of the priest of Dionysus.

As I was sitting one morning, as was my wont, in Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, which (like all Ravenna churches) is always empty, a woman came in, with a woollen shawl over her head, who, after hunting anxiously about, asked me where she would find the parish

priest. "It is," she said, "for the Madonna's milk. My husband is a laborer out of work ; he has been ill, and the worry of it all has made me unable to nurse my little baby. I want the priest, to ask him to get the Madonna to give me back my milk." I thought, as I listened to the poor creature, that there was but little hope of motherly sympathy from that Byzantine Madonna in her purple and gold magnificence, seated ceremoniously on her throne like an antique Cybele.

Little by little one returns to one's first impression, and recognizes that this thriving little provincial town, with its socialism and its *bonification*, is, after all, a nest of ghosts, and little better than the churchyard of centuries.

Never, surely, did a town contain so many coffins, or at least thrust coffins more upon one's notice. The coffins are stone, immense oblong boxes, with massive, sloping lids horned at each corner, or trough-like things with delicate, sea-wave patternings, figures of gowned saints and devices of palm-trees, peacocks, and doves, the carving made clearer by a picking out of bright green damp. They stand about in all the churches, not walled in, but quite free in the aisles, the chapels, and even close to the door. Most of them are doubtless of the fifth or sixth century ; others perhaps barbarous or mediæval imitations ; but they all equally belong to the ages in general, including our own, not curiosities or heirlooms, but serviceable furniture, into which generations have been put and out of which generations have been turned to make room for later comers. It strikes one as curious at first to see, for instance, the date 1826 on a sarcophagus probably made under Theodoric or the exarchs, but that merely means that a particular gentleman of Ravenna began that year his lease of entombment. They have passed from hand to hand (or, more properly speaking, from corpse to corpse), not merely by being occasionally discovered in digging foundations, but by inheritance, and frequently by

sale. My friends possess a stone coffin, and the receipt from its previous owner. The transaction took place some fifty years ago ; a name (they are cut very lightly) changed, a slab or coat of arms placed with the sarcophagus in a different church or chapel, a deed before the notary—that was all. What became of the previous tenant ? Once at least he surprised posterity very much ; perhaps it was in the case of that very purchase for which my friends still keep the bill. I know not ; but the stonemason of the house used to relate that, some forty years ago, he was called in to open a stone coffin, when, the immense horned lid having been rolled off, there was seen, lying in the sarcophagus, a man in complete armor, his sword by his side and visor up, who, as they cried out in astonishment, instantly fell to dust. Was he an Ostrogothic knight, some Gunther or Volker turned Roman senator, or perhaps a companion of Guido da Polenta, a messmate of Dante, a playfellow of Francesca ?

Coffins being thus plentiful, their occupants (like this unknown warrior) have played considerable part in the gossip of Ravenna. It is well known, for instance, that Galla Placidia, daughter of Theodosius, sister of Arcadius and Honorius, and wife to a Visigothic king, sat for centuries enthroned (after a few years of the strangest adventures) erect, inside the alabaster coffin, formerly plated with gold, in the wonderful little blue mosaic chapel which bears her name. You could see her through a hole quite plainly ; until, three centuries ago, some inquisitive boys thrust in a candle and burned Theodosius's daughter to ashes. Dante also is buried under a little cupola at the corner of a certain street, and there was, for many years, a strange doubt about his bones. Had they been mislaid, stolen, mixed up with those of ordinary mortals ? The whole thing was shrouded in mystery. That street corner where Dante lies, a remote corner under the wing of a church, resembled, until it was modernized and surrounded by gratings,

and filled with garlands and inscriptions to Mazzini, nothing so much as the corner of Dis where Dante himself found Farinata and Cavalcante. In it are crowded stone coffins ; and, passing there in the twilight, one might expect to see flames upheaving their lids, and the elbows and shoulders of imprisoned followers of Epicurus.

Enough of coffins ! There are live things at Ravenna, and near Ravenna ; amongst others, though few people realize its presence, there is the sea.

It was on the day of the fish auction that I first went there. In the tiny port by the pier (for Ravenna has now no harbor) they were making an incredible din over the emptyings of the nets ; pretty, mottled, metallic fish, and slimy octopuses, and sepias, and flounders looking like pieces of seaweed. The fishing-boats, mostly from the Venetian lagoon, were moored along the pier, wide-bowed things, with eyes in the prow like ships of Ulysses ; and bigger craft, with little castles and weather-vanes and saints' images and pennons on the masts like the galleys of St. Ursula as painted by Carpaccio ; but all with the splendid orange sail, patched with suns, lions, and colored stripes of the northern Adriatic. The fishermen from Chioggia, their heads covered with the high scarlet cap of the fifteenth century, were yelling at the fishmongers from town ; and all round lounged artillerymen in their white undress and yellow straps, who are encamped for practice on the sands, and whose carts and guns we had met rattling along the sandy road through the marsh.

On the pier we were met by an old man, very shabby and unshaven, who had been the priest for many years, with an annual salary of twelve pounds, of S. Maria in Porto Fuori, a little Gothic church in the marsh, where he had discovered and rubbed slowly into existence (it took him two months and Heaven knows how many pennyworths of bread !) some valuable Giottesque frescoes. He was now chaplain of the harbor, and had turned his mind to maritime inventions, designing light-

houses, and shooting dolphins to make oil of their blubber. A kind old man, but with the odd brightness of a creature who has lived for years amid solitude and fever; a fit companion for the haggard saints whom he brought, one by one, in robes of glory and golden halos, to life again in his forlorn little church.

While we were looking out at the sea, where a little flotilla of yellow and cinnamon sails sat on the blue sky-line like parrots on a rail, the sun had begun to set, a crimson ball, over the fringe of pine woods. We turned to go. Over the town, the place whence presently will emerge the slanting towers of Ravenna, the sky had become a brilliant, melancholy slate blue; and apparently out of its depths, in the early twilight, flowed the wide canal between its dim banks fringed with tamarisk. No tree, no rock or house was reflected in the jade-colored water, only the uniform shadow of the bank made a dark, narrow band alongside its glassiness. It flows on towards the invisible sea, whose yellow sails overtop the grey marshland. In thick, smooth strands of curdled water it flows, lilac, pale pink, opalescent, according to the sky above, reflecting nothing besides, save at long intervals the spectral spars and spider-like tissue of some triangular fishing-net; a wan and delicate Lethe, issuing, you would say, out of a far-gone past into the sands and the almost tideless sea.

Other places become solemn, sad, or merely beautiful at sunset. But Ravenna, it seems to me, grows actually ghostly; the past takes it back at that moment, and the ghosts return to the surface.

For it is, after all, a nest of ghosts. They hang about all those silent, damp churches, invisible, or at most tantalizing one with a sudden gleam which may, after all, be only that of the mosaics, an uncertain outline which, when you near it, is, after all, only a pale-grey column. But one feels their breathing all round. They are legion, but I do not know who they are. I only know that they are white, lumi-

nous, with gold embroideries to their robes, and wide, painted eyes, and that they are silent. The good citizens of Ravenna, in the comfortable eighteenth century, filled the churches with wooden pews, convenient, genteel in line and color, with their names and coats of arms in full on the backs. But the ghosts took no notice of this measure; and there they are, even among these pews themselves.

Bishops and exarchs and jewelled empresses, and half-Oriental autocrats, saints and bedizened court ladies, and barbarian guards and wicked chamberlains; I know not what they are. Only one of the ghosts takes a shape I can distinguish, and a name I am certain of. It is not Justinian or Theodora, who stare goggle-eyed from their mosaic in Saint Vitalis, mere wretched historic realities; *they* cannot haunt. The spectre I speak of is Theodosic. His tomb is still standing outside the town in an orchard; a great round tower, with a circular roof made (Heaven knows how) of one huge slab of Istrian stone, horned at the sides like the sarcophagi, or vaguely like a viking's cap. The ashes of the great king have long been dispersed, for he was an Arian heretic. But the tomb remains intact, a thing which neither time nor earthquake can dismantle.

In the town they show a piece of masonry, the remains of a doorway, and a delicate pillared window, built on to a modern house, which is identified (but wrongly I am told) as Theodora's palace, by its resemblance to the golden palace with the looped-up curtains on the mosaic of the neighboring church. Into the wall of this building is built a great Roman porphyry bath, with rings carved on it, to which time has adjusted a lid of brilliant green lichen. There is no more. But Theodosic still haunts Ravenna. I have always, ever since I have known the town, been anxious to know more about Theodosic, but the accounts are jejune, prosaic, not at all answering to what that great king, who took his place with Attila and Sigurd in the great Northern epic, must have been.

Historians represent him generally as a sort of superior barbarian, trying to assimilate and save the civilization he was bound to destroy ; an Ostrogothic king trying to be a Roman emperor ; a military organizer and bureaucrat, exchanging his birthright of Valhalla for Heaven knows what Aulic red-tape miseries. But that is unsatisfactory. The real man, the Berserker trying to tame himself into a Cæsar of a fallen Rome, seems to come out in the legends of his remorse and visions, pursued by the ghosts of Boethius and Symmachus, the wise men he had slain in his madness.

He haunts Ravenna, striding along the aisles of her basilicas, riding under the high moon along the dykes of her marshes, surrounded by white-stoled Romans, and Roman ensigns with eagles and crosses ; but clad, as the Gothic brass-worker of Innsbruck has shown him, in no Roman lappets and breastplate, but in full mail, with beaked steel shoes and steel gorget, his big sword drawn, his visor down, mysterious, the Dietrich of the Nibelungenlied, Theodoric king of the Goths.

These are the ghosts that haunt Ravenna, the true ghosts haunting only for such as can know their presence. Ravenna, almost alone among Italian cities, possesses moreover a complete ghost-story of the most perfect type and highest antiquity, which has gone round the world and become known to all people. Boccaccio wrote it in prose ; Dryden re-wrote it in verse ; Botticelli illustrated it ; and Byron summed up its quality in one of his most sympathetic passages. After this, to re-tell it were useless, had I not chanced to obtain, in a manner I am not at liberty to divulge, another version, arisen in Ravenna itself, and written, most evidently, in fullest knowledge of the case. Its language is the marvellous Romagnol dialect of the early fifteenth century, and it lacks all the Tuscan graces of the "Decameron." But it possesses a certain air of truthfulness, suggesting that it was written by some one who had heard the facts from those who believed in them, and

who believed in them himself ; and I am therefore decided to give it, turned into English.

About that time when (Messer Guido da Polenta was lord of Ravenna) men spoke not a little of what happened to Messer Nastasio de Honestis, son of Messer Brunoro, in the forest of Classis. Now the forest of Classis is exceeding vast, extending along the seashore between Ravenna and Cervia for the space of some fifteen miles, and has its beginning near the Church of Saint Apollinaris which is in the marsh ; and you reach it directly from the gate of the same name, but also, crossing the river Ronco where it is easier to ford, by the gate called Sisa beyond the houses of the Rasponis. And this forest aforesaid is made of many kinds of noble and useful trees, to wit, oaks, both free standing and in bushes, ilexes, elms, poplars, bays, and many plants of smaller growth but great dignity and pleasantness, as hawthorns, barberries, blackthorn, blackberry, briar-rose, and the thorn called marrucca, which bears pods resembling small hats or cymbals, and is excellent for hedging. But principally does this noble forest consist of pine-trees, exceeding lofty and perpetually green ; whence indeed the arms of this ancient city, formerly the seat of the emperors of Rome, and none other than a green pine-tree.

And the forest aforesaid is well stocked with animals, both such as run and creep, and many birds. The animals are foxes, badgers, hares, rabbits, ferrets, squirrels, and wild boars, the which issue forth and eat the young crops and grub the fields with incredible damage to all concerned. Of the birds it would be too long to speak, both of those which are snared, shot with cross-bows, or hunted with the falcon ; and they feed off fish in the ponds and streams of the forest, and grasses and berries, and the pods of the white vine (clematis) which covers the grass on all sides. And the manner of Messer Nastasio being in the forest was thus, he being at the time a

youth of twenty years or thereabouts, of illustrious birth, and comely person and learning, and prowess, and modest and discreet bearing. For it so happened that, being enamoured of the daughter of Messer Pavolo de Traversarii, the damsel, who was lovely, but exceeding coy and shrewish, would not consent to marry him, despite the desire of her parents, who in everything, as happens with only daughters of old men (for Messer Hostasio was well stricken in years), sought only to please her. Whereupon Messer Nastasio, fearing lest the damsel might despise his fortunes, wasted his substance in presents and feastings and joustings, but all to no avail.

When it happened that having spent nearly all he possessed, and ashamed to show his poverty and his unlucky love before the eyes of his townsmen, he took him to the forest of Classis, it being autumn, on the pretext of snaring birds, but intending to take privily the road to Rimini and thence to Rome, and there seek his fortune. And Nastasio took with him fowling-nets, and bird-lime, and tame owls, and two horses (one of which was ridden by his servant), and food for some days; and they alighted in the midst of the forest, and slept in one of the fowling-huts of cut branches set up by the citizens of Ravenna for their pleasure.

And it happened that on the afternoon of the second day (and it chanced to be a Friday) of his stay in the forest, Messer Nastasio, being exceeding sad in his heart, went forth towards the sea to muse upon the unkindness of his beloved and the hardness of his fortune. Now you should know that near the sea, where you can clearly hear its roaring even on windless days, there is in that forest a clear place, made as by the hand of man, set round with tall pines even like a garden, but in the shape of a horse-course, free from bushes and pools, and covered with the finest greensward. Here, as Nastasio sate him down on the trunk of a pine—the hour was sunset, the weather being uncommon clear—he

heard a rushing sound in the distance, as of the sea; and there blew a death-cold wind, and then sounds of crashing branches, and neighing of horses, and yelping of hounds, and halloes and horns. And Nastasio wondered greatly, for that was not the hour for hunting; and he hid behind a great pine-trunk, fearing to be recognized. And the sounds came nearer, even of horns, and hounds, and the shouts of huntsmen; and the bushes rustled and crashed, and the hunt rushed into the clearing, horsemen and foot, with many hounds. And behold, what they pursued was not a wild boar, but something white that ran erect, and it seemed to Messer Nastasio as if it greatly resembled a naked woman; and it screamed piteously.

Now when the hunt had swept past, Messer Nastasio rubbed his eyes and wondered greatly. But even as he wondered and stood in the middle of the clearing, behold, part of the hunt swept back, and the thing which they pursued ran in a circle on the greensward, shrieking piteously. And behold, it was a young damsel, naked, her hair loose and full of brambles, with only a tattered cloth round her middle. And as she came near to where Messer Nastasio was standing (but no one of the hunt seemed to heed him) the hounds were upon her, barking furiously, and a hunter on a black horse, black even as night. And a cold wind blew and caused Nastasio's hair to stand on end; and he tried to cry out, and to rush forward, but his voice died in his throat, and his limbs were heavy and covered with sweat, and refused to move.

Then the hounds fastening on the damsel threw her down, and he on the black horse turned swiftly, and transfixed her, shrieking dismally, with a boar-spear. And those of the hunt galloped up, and wound their horns; and he of the black horse, which was a stately youth habited in a coat of black and gold, and black boots and black feathers on his hat, threw his reins to a groom, and alighted and approached the damsel where she lay, while the

huntsmen were holding back the hounds and winding their horns. Then he drew a knife, such as are used by huntsmen, and driving it into the damsel's side cut out her heart, and threw it, all smoking, into the midst of the hounds. And a cold wind rustled through the bushes, and all had disappeared, horses and huntsmen and hounds. And the grass was untrodden as if no man's foot or horse's hoof had passed there for months.

And Messer Nastasio shuddered, and his limbs loosened, and he knew that the hunter on the black horse was Messer Guido Degli Anastagi, and the damsel Monna Filomena, daughter of the Lord of Gambellara. Messer Guido had loved the damsel greatly, and been flouted by her, and leaving his home in despair had been killed on the way by robbers, and Madonna Filomena had died shortly after. The tale was still fresh in men's memory, for it had happened in the city of Ravenna barely five years before. And those whom Nastasio had seen, both the hunter and the lady, and the huntsmen and horses and hounds, were the spirits of the dead.

When he had recovered his courage, Messer Nastasio sighed and said unto himself : " How like is my fate to that of Messer Guido ! Yet would I never, even when a spectre without weight or substance, made of wind and delusion and arisen from hell, act with such cruelty towards her I love." And then he thought : " Would that the daughter of Messer Pavolo de Traversariis might hear of this ! For surely it would cause her to relent !" But he knew that his words would be vain, and that none of the citizens of Ravenna, and least of all the damsel of the Traversari, would believe them, but rather esteem him a madman.

Now it came about that when Friday came round once more, Nastasio, by some chance, was again walking in the forest-clearing by the great pines, and he had forgotten ; when the sea began to roar, and a cold wind blew, and there came through the forest the sound of horses and hounds, causing

Messer Nastasio's hair to stand up and his limbs to grow weak as water. And he on the black horse again pursued the naked damsel and struck her with his boar-spear, and cut out her heart and threw it to the hounds. And in this fashion did it happen for three Fridays following, the sea beginning to moan, the cold wind to blow, and the spirits to hunt the deceased damsel at twilight in the clearing among the pine-trees.

Now when Messer Nastasio noticed this he thanked Cupid, which is the lord of all lovers, and devised in his mind a cunning plan. And he mounted his horse and returned to Ravenna, and gave out to his friends that he had found a treasure in Rome ; and that he was minded to forget the damsel of the Traversari and seek another wife. But in reality he went to certain money-lenders, and gave himself into bondage, even to be sold as a slave to the Dalmatian pirates if he could not repay his loan. And he published that he desired to take to him a wife, and for that reason would feast all his friends and the chief citizens of Ravenna, and regale them with a pageant in the pine forest, where certain foreign slaves of his should show wonderful feats for their delight. And he sent forth invitations, and among them to Messer Pavolo de Traversariis and his wife and daughter. And he bid them for a Friday, which was also the eve of the Feast of the Dead.

Meanwhile he took to the pine forest carpenters and masons, and such as paint and gild cunningly, and wagons of timber, and cut stone for foundations, and furniture of all kinds ; and the wagons were drawn by four-and-twenty yoke of oxen, grey oxen of the Romagnol breed. And he caused the artisans to work day and night, making great fires of dry myrtle and pine branches, which lit up the forest all around. And he caused them to make foundations, and build a pavilion of timber in the clearing which is the shape of a horse-course, surrounded by pines. The pavilion was oblong, raised by ten steps above the grass, open all

round and reposing on arches and pillars ; and there were projecting *abachi* under the arches over the capitals, after the Roman fashion ; and the pillars were painted red, and the capitals red also picked out with gold and blue, and a shield with the arms of the Honestis on each. The roof was raftered, each rafter painted with white lilies on a red ground, and heads of youths and damsels ; and the roof outside was made of wooden tiles, shaped like shells and gilded. And on the top of the roof was a weather-vane ; and the vane was a figure of Cupid, god of love, cunningly carved of wood and painted like life, as he flies, poised in air, and shoots his darts on mortals. He was winged and blindfolded, to show that love is inconstant and no respecter of persons ; and when the wind blew he turned about, and the end of his scarf, which was beaten metal, swung in the wind. Now when the pavilion was ready, within six days of its beginning, carpets were spread on the floor, and seats placed, and garlands of bay and myrtle slung from pillar to pillar between the arches. And tables were set, and sideboards covered with gold and silver dishes and trenchers ; and a raised place, covered with arras, was made for the players of fifes and drums and lutes ; and tents were set behind for the servants, and fires prepared for cooking meat. Whole oxen and sheep were brought from Ravenna in wains, and casks of wine, and fruit and white bread, and many cooks, and serving-men, and musicians, all habited gallantly in the colors of the Honestis, which are vermillion and white, parti-colored, with black stripes ; and they wore doublets laced with gold, and on their breasts the arms of the house of Honestis, which are a dove holding a leaf.

Now on Friday, the eve of the Feast of the Dead, all was ready, and the chief citizens of Ravenna set out for the forest of Classis, with their wives and children and servants, some on horseback, and others in wains drawn by oxen, for the tracks in that forest are deep. And when they arrived,

Messer Nastasio welcomed them and thanked them all, and conducted them to their places in the pavilion. Then all wondered greatly at its beauty and magnificence, and chiefly Messer Pavolo de Traversariis ; and he sighed, and thought within himself, "Would that my daughter were less shrewish, that I might have so noble a son-in-law to prop up my old age!" They were seated at the tables, each according to their dignity, and they ate and drank, and praised the excellence of the cheer ; and flowers were scattered on the tables, and young maidens sang songs in praise of love, most sweetly. Now when they had eaten their fill, and the tables been removed, and the sun was setting between the pine-trees, Messer Nastasio caused them all to be seated facing the clearing, and a herald came forward, in the livery of the Honestis, sounding his trumpet and declaring in a loud voice that they should now witness a pageant which was called the Mystery of Love and Death. Then the musicians struck up, and began a concert of fifes and lutes, exceeding sweet and mournful. And at that moment the sea began to moan, and a cold wind to blow ; a sound of horsemen and hounds and horns and crashing branches came through the wood ; and the damsel, the daughter of the Lord of Gambellara, rushed naked, her hair streaming and her veil torn, across the grass, pursued by the hounds, and by the ghost of Messer Guido on the black horse, the nostrils of which were filled with fire. Now when the ghost of Messer Guido struck that damsel with the boar-spear, and cut out her heart, and threw it, while the others wound their horns, to the hounds, and all vanished, Messer Nastasio de Honestis, seizing the herald's trumpet, blew in it, and cried in a loud voice, "The Pageant of Death and Love ! The Pageant of Death and Love ! Such is the fate of cruel damsels !" and the gilt Cupid on the roof swung round creaking dreadfully, and the daughter of Messer Pavolo uttered a great shriek and fell on the ground in a swoon.

Here the Romagnol manuscript comes to a sudden end, the outer sheet being torn through the middle. But we know from the "Decameron" that the damsel of the Traversari was so impressed by the spectre-hunt she had witnessed that she forthwith relented towards Nastagio degli Onesti, and married him, and that they lived happily ever after. But whether or not that part of the pine forest of Classis still witnesses this ghostly hunt we do not know.

VERNON LEE.

From The New Review.
SOME UNPUBLISHED REMINISCENCES OF
NAPOLEON.

NAPOLEON ON BOARD H.M.S. NORTHUM-
BERLAND, 1815.

A FEW years ago a book was published which threw a strong and not very pleasant light on the relations which existed between the ex-Emperor Napoleon and Admiral Sir George Cockburn, whose flag was hoisted on H.M.S. Northumberland when bound for St. Helena in 1815. This book contained the journals of the admiral, in which he describes the system he pursued towards Napoleon and his suite, and it is hardly too much to call it one of brow-beating and breaking-in. Some side lights are shed on this condition of things by a little book which has recently come into my hands recording the notes of conversations between Napoleon and my grandfather, the third Lord Lyttelton, held in August, 1815. Lord Lyttelton, or rather Mr. Lyttelton as he was at that time, was a relation of the admiral, and had the good fortune to be paying him a visit on the 7th August, the day on which the emperor came on board *en route* to St. Helena, the ship being anchored off Torbay. He took notes on the same evening of all that had passed, and his recollections were assisted and corrected by Lord Lowther, another guest of Sir G. Cockburn's, who had been a witness of almost all that is described. They left the ship together and put up at the

same hotel, where their joint recollections were committed to paper. Some twenty years later, fifty-two copies of this record were privately printed, and it is one of these that now lies before me. There is no reason to doubt the substantial correctness of the recorded conversations; Mr. Lyttelton does not claim absolute verbal accuracy, but he says he is sure that the substance is faithfully given, and that the more important remarks of Napoleon are quite accurately reported.

Mr. Lyttelton's first view of the emperor was when he was in the boat that brought him on board; he observed him very closely when he came on deck, and he describes his appearance thus.

"His profile seemed to me very like the common portraits of him, only that his face looked broader than I had seen it represented. . . . the top of his head was almost quite bald; his hair, of a reddish brown color, was long, rough, and, if the expression may be permitted, dishevelled. As for the expression of his countenance, I thought it rather subtle than noble. His eyes had something of a haggard look, were somewhat dimmed, I thought, and as though they might have been originally very piercing, but that time and anxiety had abated their fire. . . . His complexion appeared to me not only sallow but sickly." He seemed to be quite cheerful at first, and bowed courteously to the admiral, whom he requested to introduce the officers of the ship to him. Nine or ten of them were brought up, but as none of them knew a word of French the introduction must have been an empty formality.

Many of the suite which accompanied him on board only came to see him off, and Mr. Lyttelton was rather surprised at the little emotion they evinced at parting from him. But among them were two Poles, one old, the other young, who were striking exceptions, especially the latter. Both implored to be allowed to attend Napoleon into exile, and Mr. Lyttelton says that the grief and agony the younger

one endured at his prayer being rejected were irresistibly affecting. The number of officers allowed to go was limited, so he begged to be allowed to pass as a servant, "Si je renonce à mon grade." When he found all his entreaties were in vain, "he seemed to be plunged into a state of distraction ; his eyes were almost overflowing with tears ; he clenched his Polish cap convulsively in one hand, and kept perpetually touching his brow with the other, talking to himself, and running from one port-hole to another with such a look of wild despair that I thought he would have flung himself overboard." It is satisfactory to know that this faithful follower was allowed shortly afterwards to go to St. Helena with Sir Hudson Lowe.

The circumstances attending Mr. Lyttelton's introduction to the emperor were somewhat peculiar. The treatment Napoleon received on board the Northumberland was very different from that accorded him on board the Bellerophon, the ship to which he had originally surrendered. There he had been received as an emperor ; the captain had given up his own state cabin to him, in which he was free from any intrusion ; here he was only conceded the status of a general officer, and, although he had a small cabin to himself, he only shared the state cabin with the admiral and his friends. Sir George was determined to assert this new arrangement at the earliest opportunity, and accordingly he took his friends into the cabin where Napoleon was sitting and left them there, after telling them to sit down. Besides Mr. Lyttelton and Lord Lowther, Colonel Sir George Bingham, of the 53rd Regiment, then going to St. Helena, was thus introduced. The task was not a pleasant one, but Mr. Lyttelton seems to have played his part in it with as much delicacy as was possible under the circumstances, and as he was almost the only person on board who could speak French fluently, he got on better with Napoleon than might have been expected. It must be confessed that the British government was not

too happy in their choice of agents to carry out Napoleon's expatriation. Neither Sir G. Cockburn nor Sir Hudson Lowe had much of the *suaviter in modo*, and surely some French speaking officers might have been told off for this voyage.

Mr. Lyttelton's interview did not open too auspiciously. The emperor had apparently not noticed him before, and the admiral had not formally introduced him, so he did not know what to make of him. He looked sternly at him and asked him who he was. Mr. L. told him his name and that he was a relation of the admiral. On learning that he did not belong to the ship, he said, "Vous êtes donc ici par curiosité ?" Mr. L. : "Oui, Monsieur le Général, je ne connais aucun objet plus digne d'exciter la curiosité que celui qui m'a amené ici." He added, "Nous espérons de ne pas vous gêner, Monsieur le Général," of which remark no notice was taken, and there was then an awkward pause, during which Napoleon looked at the others rather angrily, and showed signs of annoyance at their presence. He then made a few remarks to Sir George Bingham and Lord Lowther, but their French was so bad that he soon turned again to Mr. Lyttelton. After asking him some questions about fox-hunting, and to what part of the country he belonged, he asked where he had learned to speak French so well. He enquired about several M.P.'s, mostly of the Whig party, to which Mr. L. also belonged ; of one of them he was told that he had committed suicide when "derangé d'esprit." "Etais-ce ce que vous appelez le spleen ?" a disease which he, in common with most Frenchmen, considered to be specially English.

After the conversation had lasted half an hour, Mr. Lyttelton, seeing that the presence of his visitors was distressing to Napoleon, made his bow and left the cabin. The emperor shortly after went on deck, and was walking briskly up and down when Mr. Lyttelton went up to go on shore. On seeing him, Napoleon came up and

began conversing with him, first of all rather complaining that the ship was not as smartly turned out as she might have been. But his main topic was the ungenerous treatment he was receiving. "Vous avez souillé le pavillon et l'honneur national en m'emprisonnant comme vous faites."

Mr. L. : "On n'a violé aucun engagement avec vous, et l'intérêt de la nation demande que vous soyez mis hors d'état de rentrer en France."

N. : "Peut-être donc ce que vous faites est prudent, mais ce n'est pas généreux . . . vous agissez comme une petite puissance aristocratique, et non comme un grand état libre ! je suis venu m'asseoir sur votre sol, je voulais vivre en simple citoyen de l'Angleterre." Mr. L. remarked that his party in France was still very strong, and that if he were recalled to the throne he might feel bound to obey the call.

N. : "Non, non, ma carrière est terminée."

Mr. L. reminded him that he had used the same words the year before at Elba, on which he exclaimed with great animation, "J'étais Souverain alors, j'avais le droit de faire la guerre," and then laughing, "j'ai fait la guerre au roi de France avec six cent hommes." He then went on to say that the conscription had not exhausted France, that he could have raised millions of men, and that his popularity was still great. Then, returning to his grievance, he said, "Vous auriez dû vous fier à ma parole d'honneur—ce n'est pas en user noblement avec moi —la posterité vous jugera."

He declared he had expected far different usage, and that if he had known what was going to be done with him, he might have surrendered to Austria or Russia. Mr. Lyttelton knew that the previous day, when Lord Keith said he might have been delivered up to the Russians, he had said, "Dieu m'en garde !" and so he replied that he doubted if he really meant what he said about surrendering to Russia, and Napoleon only faintly defended himself on this. He asserted

that he could have joined the army of the Loire, when he would have been at the head of one hundred thousand men, and would have established himself at Bordeaux, in which case "il y aurait eu de quoi capituler." "Si vous n'aviez d'autre dessein que d'agir selon les règles de la prudence, pourquoi donc ne pas me tuer ; c'eût été le plus sûr ?" He seemed to think he might have been allowed to live on his estates like his brother, referring, I suppose, to Lucien Bonaparte.

Mr. L., anxious to justify his country's action, asked if he might tell him "la vérité nette," and on receiving permission, said that since his invasion of Spain there was no individual in England who did not mistrust him. To this Napoleon replied that he had been invited by Charles IV. to aid him against his son, and that this was the real ground of his interference. This was rather giving himself away, and Mr. L. made the obvious retort that Charles IV. had not asked him to place Joseph Bonaparte on the throne. N. : "J'avais un grand système politique, il était nécessaire d'établir un contre poids à votre énorme puissance sur mer, et d'ailleurs ce n'est que ce qu'ont fait les Bourbons." He then alluded to the great increase of England's power through her gains in India and the colonies, and from Mr. L.'s reply it may be gathered that a "little England" party existed even then, for he said that many people of intelligence were of opinion that England lost more than she gained by these boundless distant acquisitions. One remark of the ex-emperor's is remarkable but difficult to understand, and it is a pity that Mr. L. did not ask him to explain his meaning more clearly. At some period of the interview (Mr. Lyttelton forgot the precise point), Napoleon said : "Je voulais préparer au prince régent l'époque la plus glorieuse de son règne." Whether he meant that he was affording him an opportunity for a great display of magnanimity, or what, is impossible to say. Perhaps some vague dream crossed his mind of an alliance between the great-

est maritime and the greatest military power to dominate the world.

The conversation then turned on Russia, where Mr. L. had passed his honeymoon a few years before, and Napoleon suddenly said, "Au reste, ce n'est pas moi qui ai brûlé Moscou," to which Mr. L. replied that he had not thought he had committed such an act of folly as to burn his own winter quarters.

Referring to his designs against England, he said that during twenty years of war he had been planning "Votre perte, Non, mais votre abaissement." The flotilla in the Channel ports was only a feint, the real invasion of England was to be attempted by the squadrons from Brest and Ferrol.

Regarding the balance of power, Napoleon rather agreed with Mr. L. in thinking that, from England's point of view, the aggrandizement of Austria and Prussia was desirable as a counterpoise to the power of France, observing more than once that it was our business to reduce the power of France, that England should keep her eye on France.

Mr. L. had made a speech in Parliament on the spoliation of Saxony, part of which had been annexed by Prussia, and reference to this led up to the defection of the Saxon contingent at a critical moment in the battle of Leipsic. Napoleon said that though this had not been fatal to him at the moment, he found next day that it had put out all his calculations, and forced him to retreat.

The state of France, he said, was such as might be expected in a country on which a king had been imposed by foreign bayonets. Something brought the slave trade into the conversation ; he looked upon it not only as inhuman but impolitic, especially for France. His reason for the latter opinion was that French capital being urgently needed in France itself, it would be a great mistake to employ it to import negroes into French colonies which would fall into our hands the moment war broke out. He talked a good deal of the condition of French manufac-

tures, which he said recent chemical discoveries had done much to stimulate, instancing the extraction of sugar from beet-root and indigo from "pastel."

The battle of Waterloo was alluded to, but nothing of military interest was extracted from him, except his opinion of British troops, which Mr. L. directly asked for.

N. (looking more grave and serious than usual) : "L'Infanterie Anglaise est très bonne."

Mr. L. : "Relativement à la Française ?"

N. : "L'Infanterie Française est aussi très bonne."

Mr. L. : "A la baïonnette ?"

N. : "Elle est aussi bonne à la baïonnette. Beaucoup dépend de la conduite."

Mr. L. : "Le corps de Génie ? l'Artillerie ?"

N. : "Tout cela est bon, très bon."

Mr. L. : "C'est à vous, M. le Général, que nous devons nos progrès dans l'art de la guerre."

N. : "Eh ! on ne peut faire la guerre sans devenirs soldat, l'histoire de tous les pays prouve cela."

The conversation ended somewhat abruptly. Napoleon observing suddenly, "Il me semble qu'il fait un peu frais," and going straight down to his cabin without any ceremony of leave-taking.

These conversations lasted nearly two hours, and Mr. Lyttelton notices that the emperor's manner of talking was quite free from passion or excitement, he hardly ever raised his voice, and used little or no gesticulation. There was nothing in his demeanor that indicated dejection, and he seemed ready to talk on any subject that was started. He was civil enough, though perhaps not exactly courteous ; he never once said monsieur to Mr. Lyttelton, or milord to Lord Lowther, and, maybe, there was no particular reason why he should.

There may not be much that is important in these notes, but still these fragments of talk and the touches of description of face, figure, voice, and manner bring the man vividly before

us, and there is something grimly tragic in the picture of him, intolerant of restraint, with dimmed eye, and already of sickly appearance, cooped up in an old-fashioned man-of-war, deprived even of the luxury of privacy, starting on this, his last journey, to the "isle de fer," as he called St. Helena.

As far as I am aware, Mr. Lyttelton was the only private individual who had an opportunity of conversing with Napoleon during his stay in British waters before his departure into exile, and as almost everything about Napoleon is interesting, I hope this record may be considered so. Nevertheless, it is impossible, especially for a soldier, to lay the book down without a feeling of disappointment, and a sense of opportunities wasted. It is tantalizing to the student of the Waterloo campaign to read of a talk with Napoleon within two months of the great battle, and to find only a slight reference to it. No doubt it is quite likely that, if the subject had been discussed, Napoleon's version would not have been too trustworthy, but still, light might have been thrown by the principal actor on some of its much controverted incidents while the facts were still fresh in his mind.

However, it was not my grandfather's fault that he was not a professional soldier (though there are indications in this record that he was not altogether unfamiliar with military matters), but it is a matter of regret to at least one of his descendants that, when he had an opportunity of discussing war with the greatest master of the art the world has ever seen, he did not more fully avail himself of it.

NEVILLE G. LYTTELTON.

From *The Argosy.*
BY THE LIGHT OF A CAMP FIRE.
A TRUE EXPERIENCE.

IT was on the shores of Lake Taupo that it happened; years ago, long before the tourist found his way to that New Zealand inland sea, and in the days when the visits of the *pakeha*

(white-faced stranger) were as rare as talking birds.

Major Drummond and I were spending a time of enforced idleness at Tokaanu — a Maori settlement at the extreme southern end of the lake — awaiting the pleasure of a chief to make up his mind about a matter we need not go into here. This district is alive with hot springs, and for days our sole diversion consisted in scrambling out of one of the *puias* — as they are locally termed — and tumbling headlong into another, with a happy disregard for the therapeutic value of the different waters.

At length, the novelty of the pastime wearing away, and the chief apparently being as far from coming to a decision as ever, we determined to go off somewhere and have a day's pig hunting.

Upon inquiry we learned that some distance along the shore of the lake, beyond the rocky promontory of Karangahape, there was a spot reputed to be swarming with wild pigs.

I say "reputed," for the Maoris could speak from surmise only, as the locality was *tapu*, and consequently never visited by them. Years before, a valorous chief of power and high command, one of the terrible battle-fighters who lived in the days of the noble dignity of his race, had died and been buried there. After the ceremony of interment the high priest had unexpectedly declared the whole neighborhood sacred. Immediately the frightened people — leaving everything as it happened to be when the dread decree of *tapu* was pronounced, for to have touched one single article subsequently would have been sacrilege to be atoned for only by death — rushed in a mass to the gateway of the palisade and passed out, never to return.

In this unceremonious flight many pigs were left behind, and it was a natural supposition that they had multiplied and become abundant in the land.

The hope of a good day's sport which this information had kindled in our breasts, was, however, discouraged by the head chief, who, on hearing of our

inquiries touching the whereabouts of the place, summoned us before him and forbade us to go near the consecrated ground under any pretence whatever.

Notwithstanding this rigorous interdiction, our thoughts wandered to the tusky boars there must be there after so many years' preservation, and we hungered for forbidden fruit. There was one way out of the difficulty. If we could procure the services of some Maori we might go by stealth.

Fortunately for our purpose there happened to be in the village an old native named Hoti, in whose eyes the ways of the white man had early found favor. While the rest of his tribe clung to their superstitious rites and religious ceremonies with increased fervor — for the Maoris of this district were the last of the race to accept Christianity — he had gladly availed himself of the teachings of the pakeha, and conformed, to the best of his ability, to civilized conditions of life.

Whether he was sincere in his conversion, or was still a savage at heart practising a semblance of civilization merely for the material advantages which a benevolent but ignorant government were conferring upon all who professed peace as a sort of bribe, to damp the combustible elements of latent savagery, we were unable to say. However that may have been, as he declared in strong terms that he had relinquished all connection with his ancient superstitious belief, we thought he might be safely approached about the matter we had most at heart.

In a speech instinct with tact, for he knew the terrible awe in which tapu was held by the Maoris, the major sounded him.

Great was our delight when the old fellow assured us, as he held out his hand for the guerdon which we had thought fit to promise him beforehand, that tapu had ceased to have any significance for him, save as a reminder of a heathenish faith he had long since abandoned. He would he said, have a canoe and two good pig-dogs ready within the hour.

Before starting we were subjected to a severe questioning by the chief as to our intended movements; but thanks to Hoti's civilization, his answers, though not strictly veracious, were full of imaginative ingenuity; so that all suspicion was allayed.

It was a calm, sunshiny morning, and the surface of the lake was like glass; so, merrily plying our paddles in rhythm to a Maori song we sent the canoe skimming over the water.

Well on in the day, when the afternoon sun was reaching down to touch the towering peak of Puketapu, we passed beneath a precipitous cliff three hundred feet high, which sloped rapidly away on the far side to the level of the lake. Abruptly turning the point of this headland we paddled into a little bay and ran the nose of the canoe upon the beach which fringed the shore.

Bundling out the dogs — great savage brutes that would have thought no more of hounding demons back to the gates of Hades, if such might be attempted, than of snapping at one of the flies which were buzzing about their ears — we hauled up the canoe and proceeded to explore the sacred place.

Before us stretched an open space where once had stood the populous settlement which had been so hastily abandoned. Here and there at wide intervals a lichen-spotted post, all awry, marked the line where ran the palisade. Scattered about within the old enclosure, half buried in damp and clotted herbage, lay decaying pieces of the great chief's mausoleum — blocks and slabs of wood, carved with exquisite skill into grotesque representations of the human form, and ornamented with a bewildering network of symmetrical and significant scroll designs.

And that was all that the niggard hand of time had spared as evidence of man's whilom occupation. Nothing remained of the primeval forest but the skeletons of trees rising out of, or lying upon, a dank bed of rotting leaves and branches through which our feet went crashing at every step.

A spring far up the scarred hillside fed a stream of dark water in its course adown a barren gully.

On it came, not like an ordinary New Zealand stream of silvery brightness which bubbles in tinkling laughter along a bed fringed every foot of the way with fragile fern and tender moss, but gliding sullenly over a slimy rock here, twisting round an impeding boulder there, anon crawling beneath a fallen tree — always quiet and snake-like — till it reached the level ground below and slid on beneath a floor of rotting leaves and branches. At times a ray of sunshine, breaking through the decaying crust of vegetable matter, seemed to speckle its black surface with scales of light and gave it the very appearance of a noisome reptile stealthily creeping away below.

On nearing the lake the stream coiled itself for a space into the form of a gloomy pool, half choked with dry rushes and sickly scum, and then, slipping over the oozy lips of the tarn, wriggled down the bank without noise, and went floating away on the surface of the blue water in a long, black, twisting line — snake-like to the last.

Stillness was over everything. But it was a peace which brought no beauty to the place. Nought was there but desolation and decay. All life, animal and vegetable alike, seemed to have been scorched by a blast from some devastating fire. It was a dead spot. A spot where nature had ceased to work.

We were too tired, having sat so long in a cramped position in the canoe, to care for any sport that day. Moreover, by the time we had looked round the place the day was almost spent; so we sent Hoti to hunt for a pig for our supper while we got the camp in order for the night. By the time we had cut the fern for our bedding, made a fire, and got the water boiling, the Maori was back with the hams of a small pig slung over his shoulder. He reported that a little distance back, where the fern-root was large, he had seen on all sides unmistakable signs of pigs being present in

numbers. No better relish to tickle our appetites could we have had than this news, and the strips of toasted pork, washed down with "billy tea," tasted as food can only taste when eaten in the open air by the happy and hungry.

By the time we had swallowed the last mouthful and knocked the tea-leaves out of our pannikins, a faint twilight shade — the forerunner of the brief dusk which in Austral climes takes the place of northern gloaming — was upon us.

Piling high the fire-logs, for the air was chilly, we stretched ourselves upon spring-like couches of fern and lit our pipes. The dogs, feeling cold, crept near the fire and lay down beside their master.

Wrapped in our blankets, but with no other covering or shelter between us and the heavens, we lay dreamily gazing at the flames as they leaped into the black pall overhead ; experiencing meanwhile that soothing and voluptuous sensation which smoking after a hearty meal alone affords. For a time we talked languidly of the prospect of sport on the morrow. Gradually our voices became lower and our remarks more brief. Finally came the hush of repose.

The major and Hoti dropped off to slumber and were at rest ; but, do what I would, I could not sleep.

From time to time an owl hooted from out the deep shadow of the dead forest. At intervals a shrill cry of a passing kaka, high in heaven, came down through space. Occasionally, far away and faint, from some lonely mere by the dreary shore, boomed the deep note of the bittern. But these natural sounds of night did not disturb the silence in any sense ; they seemed rather to make manifest and intensify the stillness which lay otherwise over the earth ; a stillness which became so strangely pronounced and oppressive that it was with difficulty I suppressed an inclination to cry out aloud and break the spell.

As I lay watching the dancing fire-light playing on my features, I saw my

companions stir and turn and heard them mutter in their slumber.

The dogs, too, appeared as restless and ill at ease as they, for they frequently rose, turned, and uttering a faint whimper laid down again. The wind, which had risen at nightfall, moaned among the tree-tops with a dirge-like sound which was melancholy in the extreme.

Nought was visible at any distance save when a log burned through, and, falling, sent a cloud of sparks whirling into the black night air.

Then for a few seconds, as the wraith-like folds of smoke were wafted to and fro—to one's fancy like the shades of despairing souls aimlessly floating through space, yet finding no rest in their eternal wanderings—the white trunks of the dead trees, illumined by the fitful glare, loomed out of the black void, phantasmal, vague; while the dangling strands of moss swaying from the blackened boughs, stretched forth like spectral anguished limbs, were touched with the lurid reflection of the glow, and assumed the weird semblance of ghostly drapery streaming in the murky air—fantastic, unreal.

Small wonder, I thought, that the dwellers in those wilds, when travelling, should dread the approaching night, and fear to sleep in the gloomy depths of the bush! Small wonder, too, that such profound solemnity should touch the springs of morbid fancy and fill the untutored mind with superstitious awe. The Maoris might well speak with bated breath of dreaded things of evil, and people the waste solitudes with fallacies of the brain—hideous and enigmatic!

Even while I was most deeply buried in eerie thoughts such as these, the dogs of a sudden sprang to their feet and, uttering a few premonitory growls, rushed in the direction of the stagnant pool, barking loudly.

I reached out my arm and touched the major.

"All right," he said quietly. "I hear."

For a space all was still. Then there

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came drifting to us a low sound, at first strange and indefinable, but which grew, as we listened, into a canine whine; now gradually rising to a mournful wail, now ebbing away to silence in lingering cadence. It was an appealing cry; a cry unlike anything I ever heard in my waking senses.

For a time all was quiet. Then with the suddenness of a thunderclap the dogs burst forth in a regular storm of barking which was dreadful to hear; for it was not in anger that they barked but in abject fear.

The major seized some of his fern bedding and threw it on the fire. Brightly it burned up and showed the animals backing step by step as though retreating before an advancing foe. Nearer and nearer they came towards us; still backing, still barking in a horrible, frenzied way.

When opposite where we lay, and at a distance of about twenty feet, the major again threw some fern upon the fire. Instantly it burst into flames and lit up the place like day. I peered at the ground before the dogs to see what could be the cause of their eldritch clamor.

There was nothing there! There was nothing that I could see; yet the dogs were convulsed with a violent shuddering in every fibre.

Still barking furiously, still pursuing the same backward movement before the invisible object of their dread, they slowly crossed the open space and reached the spot where the monument to the deified chief had stood. Then, after a few moments of shuddering hesitation, the quivering wretches gathered themselves together for a spring, and, uttering two awe-struck yells of such anguish, such horrible despair, as I hope never to hear again, flew savagely at something in the air of the height of a man's throat, and then fled into the darkness howling dismally.

For a few moments my head spun round like a top, and there appeared to be a weight as of cold lead at the pit of my stomach which threatened to turn me sick.

When I had recovered from my state of practical unconsciousness, I turned to speak to Hoti, but on catching sight of the face beneath the tangled mass of black hair I was struck dumb. The Maori's eyes were fixed and staring with horror; his whole frame shook as though palsied; and he cowered to the earth crazed with fear. He opened his twitching lips to speak but no sound came through them. The struggle within from some dire emotion warped his features out of recognition and made his face ghastly to see. Suddenly with a cry of unspeakable misery he staggered to his feet and, seizing a burning brand from the fire (for a Maori dare not move abroad in the dark) he waved it aloft and rushed headlong from the place.

As the major and I stood in silence watching the erratic movement of the blazing stick as its bearer leaped over or dodged round the many impediments in his way, I furtively glanced at my companion to see if I could read aught in his face that would tend to dissipate the horrible suspicions which flooded my mind. But the scrutiny brought no relief to me, for I noticed that his brow was deeply furrowed and that his lips were tightly closed like those of a strong man battling with pain.

Whilst I stood thus scanning the major's features my ears caught the sound of a wail, spoken in the beautiful vernacular, as it floated along on the still night air. "Alas! Alas! I must die, for what avail is sacrifice and prayer against the furious power of desecrated tapu? Is it not the outraged spirit of the angry chief, whose grave I have profaned? Ah! Woe is me! Why did I hearken unto the wicked words of the white stranger from the other side of the big sea, for now I shall be given over to the powers of darkness below—even to the depths of Nuku! The waters of my life shall ebb out and the darkness of Po shall enshroud me in the long night—in the night of manifold darkness! Alas! Alas! I must die!"

The weird lamentation ceased, and the spark was lost to view in the high

fern which clothed the hillside; but, from the direction it was taking when we last saw it, Hoti apparently was making for the summit of the cliff.

After an interval of anxious watching we saw a small star shoot out of the sky, and, falling in the direction of the north—the far north where the spirit-path leads to the spirit-land—bury itself in the lake.

At this distance of time I attribute no superstitious importance to the strange incident of that night, for now I know it to have been nothing but a wreath of miasmal mist which probably the heat from the fire caused to ascend from that stagnant pool. But at the time, situated as we were in the gloomy depths of the bush, and beset with the vagueness and mystery of the day grown old, I think that one may be pardoned for momentarily forgetting the lessons which reason teaches, and finding one's thoughts turning towards shades that are said to walk in darkness and are supposed to haunt such a spot as this.

From Blackwood's Magazine.
"THAT DAMNABLE COUNTRY."

SUCH was the description—"this damnable country"—given of Ireland, now many generations ago, by an English statesman to his superiors in London concerning the land he had been sent awhile to administer; and the same phrase, or the same sentiment in different words, has been re-echoed hundreds of times since, by politicians and non-politicians on each side of the Channel, respecting the island "lying a-loose," as Campion, the historian in the reign of Elizabeth has it, "on the west ocean." That damnable country! Far be it from me to add the very smallest stone to the colossal cairn of controversy that has recently been raised over the Irish question. I went to Ireland—I am ashamed to say, for the first time—this spring, and I returned from it with the feeling that it is anything rather than damnable. In-

deed, I sometimes find myself almost wishing that the intervening seasons would pass, that it might again be May, and I might anew be gathering thrift amid the landward-flying foam of Loop Head, listening to the missel-thrushes shrilling in the gardens of Tourin or the woods of Dromana, watching the smiles and tears of fair fitful Killarney, losing myself in the gorse-covered clefts of matchless Glengariff, or dazzled and almost blinded by the boundless bluebell woods of Abbey Leix. I do not willingly allow that Ireland is lovelier still than England, but it is. One has said with Æneas, only too often, when spring came round, *Italiam petimus?* Yet are not Bantry Bay and Clon-Mac-Nois as beautiful, and as halowed by the past, even as the Gulf of Spezia and the cyclopean walls of Sora? But then I went to Ireland, not in the pursuit of angry polemics, to which I feel I can add nothing new, but in search of natural beauty and human kindness. Nowhere have I ever met with more of either.

First impressions are a sort of premonitory experience; and as the sun sank lower in a cloudless sky over a surgeless sea, I could not gaze on the tender sinuosities of the Wicklow Mountains, or turn to the Hill of Howth, Ireland's Eye, and the more distant Lambay Island, without a sense of rising gladness that I was at last to set foot on a land that greets one with so fair and feminine a face.

The most indulgent imagination could hardly cast a halo over the unloveliness of Dublin; and not even the most gracious and agreeable hospitality could make regret prevail over anticipation as I turned my face westward. But the gorse, the pastures, and the streams of Kildare would have made me forget the most attractive of cities, though I was well aware I was passing through perhaps the least beautiful part of Ireland. A couple of mornings later I was driving on an outside car, balanced on the other side by a congenial companion, towards Athlone, where we were to take train for the coast of Clare. The driver assured us that he

could easily traverse the distance in an hour and twenty minutes, so I gave him an hour and forty. I had quite forgotten, in the exhilaration of a new experience, that accuracy is not a Celtic gift, and that time is computed long or short, according as it is thought you wish it to be the one or the other. Moreover, the Irish mile is a fine source of confusion when distances are computed. In one county a mile means a statute mile, in another it means an Irish mile; and though you may recollect that it takes fourteen of the first to make eleven of the second, it does not at all follow that your local conductor will do so. My companion, who knew something of the road, suddenly asked me from under her umbrella (for it was raining in the most approved Irish manner) what time it was, and on getting her answer, she rejoined we had still three miles to cover, and only eighteen minutes to do it in. The wish to oblige, and native hopefulness of temperament, made the driver exclaim, "Oh, we'll do it!" and straightway he imparted to his horse an alertness of which I should not have thought it capable. Watch in hand, I saw us trot through the streets of Athlone at a rattling pace, and we had both made up our minds that the train was caught. But again that curious vagueness of mind and happy-go-lucky indiscipline of character came into play; and though we really were just in time, he drove past the entrance to the station, and did not discover his mistake till too late. It then turned out that he had never been to Athlone before, and had not the faintest notion where the station was. I have observed that most travellers in such circumstance fume, fret, and objurgate. We laughed consumedly, though we were well aware that Athlone is scarcely a place in which to spend several hours pleasantly, and that now, instead of arriving at Kilkee at half past three, we could not get there till after nine. Perhaps our good humor was due in some measure to the fact that, some three miles away, was a house where we knew we could con-

sume the inevitable interval agreeably enough ; and we were soon making for it. But Irish hospitality does not understand the mere "looking-in-on-us" which satisfies so many English people ; and we were bidden, indeed irresistibly commanded, to pass the night with the hosts we had thus surprised. We were amply repaid, in more ways than one, for our equanimity ; for the next day was as fine as the previous one had been morose, and so we started on our wanderings in search of striking scenery, in sunshine instead of in storm.

I am told Kilkee is "a fashionable watering-place." Happily watering-places and fashion mean something different on the west coast of Ireland from what they signify on the south coast of Britain, or one need scarcely have bent one's steps towards Kilkee even in order to see Loop Head and the Cliffs of Moher. Even at the height of its season, for I suppose it has one, Kilkee must be what those who resort to Eastbourne or Bournemouth would call a very dull little place. You can get out of any part of it in two or three minutes, to find yourself on the undenitzened cliffs that form the westernmost barrier between this realm and the Atlantic. If there were any strangers in the place in the early days of May save ourselves, I did not observe them. We were the sole occupants of a large, old-fashioned, and quite comfortable enough inn, which the local taste for high-sounding words would probably wish one to call a hotel. It takes its name from Moore's Bay on which it stands. You observe by various little indications that the standard of comfort, convenience, and refinement is lower by a few inches than in England ; but why should it not be ? I pity the people who travel through the world with their own weights and measures, their own hard-and-fast rule of how things should look, and how they should be done. If you have to sit with the door open because, should you not do so, the smoke and dust of the turf fire would be blown all over the house, is that such a hardship to folks who have got nothing

to do but to be pleasant and enjoy themselves ? If the green Atlantic water, the blackly towering cliffs, the vast expanse of rising and rolling emerald down, the soft, insinuating air, and the sense of freedom and "awayness," do not compensate you for the lack of hot water in your sleeping chamber and for a certain friendly irregularity in the service, go not to Clare or Galway, but follow your own trite footsteps to Brighton, Nice, or Cannes. We for our part thought Kilkee, its lean chickens, its imperfect soda-bread, and its lack of vegetables (all, of course, save the national potato) absolutely delightful. How the winds must blow and bellow sometimes, and the waves rear and plunge and toss their iron-grey manes along and over that crenelated coast ! The word "over" is no figure of speech, for there are times when the foam is flung, by waves indignant at the first check they have met with for two thousand miles, high over the foreheads of the loftiest crags and far inland on to the stunted grass of the grey-green downs. There is a peculiar pleasure in watching how gentle the strong can be, how strong the gentle ; and when we got to Kilkee, there seemed at first almost a caressing touch in the dimpling green water, as though it had the soothing stroke of a soft and velvety hand. But as we pushed on to the bolder bluffs and towards the open sea, even on that comparatively windless May sundown, the waves, when challenged or interfered with, waxed black and angry, swirled round and round in great, sinuous troughs and coils, and then rushed and raced with imperative fury through the jagged channels made for them by the millions of domineering breakers that had for centuries preceded them, and forced a way somehow, somewhere, through the granite barriers. We stood hushed by the splendor and sonorous terror of it, and like Xenophon's Ten Thousand, I cried out at length, Θάλασσα ! Θάλασσα ! as though I had never seen the sea before. Neither the Yorkshire nor the Devonshire cliffs can show anything comparable in

stern beauty and magnificence with the west coast of Ireland. Their billows are baby billows, mere cradles rather, swaying and swinging for a child's or a lover's lullaby, when paragoned with these monsters of the real deep, these booming behemoths, never fixed nor crystallized, and therefore never extinct, — charging squadrons of ocean-horses, coming on ten thousand strong, glittering and gleaming in all the panoply of serried onset, and then broken and lost in the foam and spume of their own champing and churning. Turn the headland, which mayhap now fronts leeward, and all those war-like waves seem like dolphins at peace and play. Their very backs subside, and you see nothing but indescribably green water, green of a green you have never seen before, pearly, pellucid, the mirror, not of eternity, but of whatever tender mood of the moment. Look round ! look wide ! look far ! your eye will meet nothing but the lonely and uncompromising gaze of nature. This it is that gives one the sense of "awakeness" of which I spoke. Is it not the duke in "*Measure for Measure*" who says : —

For I have ever loved the life removed ?

Here indeed, he might have got it, far more effectually than in any cloister that was ever reared. England nowhere now gives one quite this sensation. Should you get beyond the smoke of the locomotive, you will with difficulty evade the shadow of the tourist. But even by this all-penetrating person some of the most beautiful parts of Ireland are forgotten and spared.

A road that for the most part follows the wavering coast-line was made from Kilkee to Loop Head in the dark days of the still remembered famine, and the driver of our car told me he had helped to make it. He was communicative enough in answer to questions put to him ; but in his case, as in many another later on, I observed little of that loquacious gaiety, and still less of the spontaneous humor, which we are educated to expect from Irish compan-

ionship. Of course, my experience was limited and imperfect ; but I found myself once remarking, no doubt with a touch of extravagance, that it must be a very dull Englishman who finds Irish people particularly lively. Doubtless they are more amiable in the social sense ; but I cannot put aside the impression that sadness is the deepest note in the Irish character. They remind one of what Madame de Staél said of herself, *Je suis triste, mais gai*. Under provocation or stimulus they become both loquacious and merry ; nor need the provocation be very forcible. But they readily fall back again into the minor key, and much of their wit springs from their sensibility to the tearfulness of things. " You can talk them into anything," said one of themselves to me ; and I think it is still more true that they can talk themselves into anything — for the moment at least. They are sad, but not serious. Indeed their want of what an Englishman means by seriousness is very noticeable ; and they shift " from grave to gay, from lively to severe," with astonishing mobility. It is the profound sadness of their character which makes them so sociable, since in companionship, and most of all in voluble talk, they for a time escape from it. A person of high seriousness requires no one to help him to be gravely cheerful, and his spirits are never depressed by solitude. It is in society, rather than in solitude, that he is conscious of being, or at least of seeming, morose. The gaiety of a sad person is always demonstrative, exuberant, almost noisy ; for he wants others to see how tremendously happy he has suddenly become. Again removed from " wine and women, mirth and laughter," he relapses into the passive gloom natural to one who is conscious of a mystery which is too congenial to him for him to try or to want to solve it. The Irishman sees into his native mist, but not through it. He is best understood when you watch him abiding within the influence of brown, barren bog, of unapproachable peaks, and of the wail of homeless waves.

Though otherwise but little akin to the island of the lotos-eaters, Ireland is withal a land where it seems always afternoon. In their normal movements the Irish are much quieter than the English. I am speaking, of course, of peasants, not of politicians, nor yet of folk huddled so closely together in the streets that they irritate each other all day long. The very children in Ireland do not shout as English children do. Both young and old stand, or sit, or gaze, well content to do so; being alive—I might almost say, waiting for life to come to an end—seeming occupation enough for them. Eruptions and explosions of gaiety, of course, they have; and these are so volcanic, that they perforce attract much attention. But I think people fail to observe that, like to volcanoes generally, their normal condition is one of quietude. They have irregular impulses, but they have no settled purpose. How can they have, in a world they do not profess or care to understand?

Their soul proud Science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk or Milky Way.

They know their own cabin, their own patch of "lazy" potatoes, their own boat and fishing-nets, their eternal dependence on the forces of nature, their eternal feud with people who they think do nothing for them, yet claim a share in the fruit of their labors; the imperfectly understood theories of a pastor who, perhaps, is himself imperfectly instructed in the dogmas he affirms, and that there is something called Ireland whose lot they believe is, and has immemorially been, as hard as their own. Truth to tell, in ordinary moments, and when some one does not come and "talk them into" indignation, they bear its supposed wrongs very patiently, just as they patiently bear their own. When not stimulated by professional agitators they ask little, they expect little, from life. They are not *indociles pauperiem pati*. Indeed, poverty seems natural, and even congenial, to them. Life is

not to them, as to Englishmen or Scotsmen, a business to conduct, to extend, to render profitable. It is a dream, a little bit of passing consciousness on a rather hard pillow,—the hard part of it being the occasional necessity for work, which spoils the tenderness and continuity of the dream. A little way before you get to Loop Head, there is a series of seaward-jutting rocks of low elevation, which have been christened The Bridges, for the waves have burrowed under them, so that they stand arched in mid-air. At the extreme point we saw a young fellow in knee-breeches, blue woollen stockings, short jacket, and Mercury hat—the only human thing visible, save ourselves, whether seaward or landward—gazing apparently at the waves. "I wonder what he comes here for," said my companion.

"Ask him," I said, and she did so.

"I've coom to see the toombling," he said.

The "toombling" was the plunging and shattering of the breakers, and looking at them was occupation enough for this letterless lad. A potential poet, some one perhaps will say? But no. A poet, to be of much account, must understand, must find or put a meaning in, inanimate things; and this boy, typical of his race, was asking no questions, much less finding harmonious answers to them. He was only gazing at the "toombling" he could not control, any more than he and his can control the wilful seasons, the fiat that brought them here, that will take them away, and that deals so austere with them in the interval.

Such, at least, was the explanation I offered of his being there, and the cause of it. Perhaps we found reason, in some degree, to modify our conclusion a few minutes later; for, seeking to return to the point where we had left our car, we passed through a gap in a loose stone wall, and saw sitting under it, just to the right of us, a bare-headed, bare-legged peasant girl of, I dare say, some eighteen years of age, just as unoccupied as the youngster we had left pondering at the waves, but

looking by no means so unhappy. On her face was

The bloom of young desire, and purple light of love,

and her eyes seemed to sparkle with amorous mischief. Possibly she was the cause of his having gone, in vexation of spirit, to look on the "toombulling," and so make himself yet more miserable, like many another tantalized swain before him, by communicating his ephemeral sorrow to the permanent indifference of nature.

Within three miles of Loop Head, we were told, no flower will grow save the pink sea-thrift ; and I can well believe it. It is a sort of Hinterland to the ocean, within whose influence it lies ; and, though the sea has not actually annexed it, it permits no law save that of its own blusterous barrenness to rule there. The Coast-Guard Station represents the indomitable audacity and imperious usurpation of man ; but at Loop Head, though he can build walls, and take and record observations, he can do no more. He can grow nothing for his own sustenance ; and on many a wild winter night, if he ventures out of doors, he has to crawl on hands and knees under the protection of the walls of the small, herbless enclosure, lest he should be blown and battered against the barriers of his own raising. From the lighthouse one gets a commanding view of the estuary of the Shannon. Looking southward, one descries, if dimly, Kerry Head, Brandon Mount, and the hills of Dingle promontory, with the summits of Macgillicuddy's Reeks darkly behind them. Northward lie the mountains of Connemara, and the islands of Aran well out to sea. A little way below the Coast-Guard Station, there is what you may call either a little island or a huge rock, separated from the mainland by a narrow but terrific chasm. An enterprising engineer thought a few years ago he would like to throw a bridge across it, and he persevered in his task for about half the distance. He then wearied either of the labor or the cost, and the intended communication thus stops short

midway over the profound black gap and the tormented waters. Last year, however, a derrick was pushed across, and a small party landed for the day, leaving behind them a couple of goats. One we could still descrie calmly grazing, but the other has either died or been blown out to sea. On the dark, narrow ledge on each side of the rocky chasm, all the way down innumerable puffins were congregated, as restless in their flight, and as melancholy in their cry, as the waters over which they skim, or into which they fitfully dive and a while disappear.

It takes some time to get beyond the impression of such a scene, even though one may have left it, visually, behind ; and I could still hear those pairing seabirds, and still see the sweeping, swirling coils of strandless water running in and out of the black, honeycombed abysses, until the bay and village of Carrigaholt, and the hamlets of Cross and Kilbaha, obliterated the reminiscence by stimulating the senses to receive fresh sights and sounds. I was greatly surprised at finding so many national schools in so wild and poorly populated a district as that between Loop Head and Kilkee ; and I noticed that, almost in every instance, an older, meaner, and thatched building had been superseded by a new, larger, and more commodious one of stone and slate.

In the afternoon of the following day we crossed the Shannon from Kilrush to Tarbert, and had occasion to note how a river, nobler and more inviting in its proportions than any English stream, be it Thames, or Severn, or Mersey, showed neither sail nor funnel, and is practically neglected by the commerce of the world. The modern rhetorician, primed with statistics, and animated by conventional convictions, might doubtless produce — and, for anything I know of, may frequently have produced — a striking effect on the platform by dwelling on this conspicuous fact, and out of it manufacturing another Irish grievance. But I think I can perceive that, in presence of the many painful phenomena and

perplexing problems that owe their origin to high-pressure enterprise and material development, it is gradually becoming pardonable to hint that civilization, as properly understood, is not necessarily identical with huge cities, countless factories, and interminable goods-trains. I am aware that the English ideal of life is, or has been till quite recently, that every man, woman, and child should get as much work out of himself as he possibly can, and should in turn get as much out of the machines that he produces. In a word, according to their view, existence was given us in order that we may be perpetually active, and by our activity go on increasing what is called the wealth of the world. Of course, as it is only fair to add, there underlies this theory the further doctrine or belief that, by the operation thus described, man will best expand his intellect and most surely improve his morals.

An examination of the soundness of this view, to be of any value, would require no little time and demand no little space ; and this is not the moment for it in any case. But one cannot travel in Ireland without perceiving that this so-many-horse-power and perpetual-catching-of-trains theory of life is not one that is accepted by the Irish people ; and I do not think it ever will be. Their religion, their traditions, their chief occupations, their temperament, all of which I suppose are closely allied, are opposed to it. The saying, "Take it aisy ; and if you can't take it aisy, take it as aisy as you can," doubtless represents *their* theory of life ; and, for my part, if it were a question either of dialectics or of morals, I would sooner have to defend that view of existence than the so-many-horse-power one. So far from a wise man getting all he can out of himself in one direction, he will, it seems to me, rigidly and carefully abstain from doing so in the interests of that catholic and harmonious development which requires that he should get a little out of himself in every direction. One would not like to assert that the bulk of the Irish people are "harmoniously de-

veloped." But neither, if I may be permitted to say so, are the English or the Scotch people ; and as, in reality, all three probably err by lob-sided activity or lob-sided inactivity, it still remains to be seen whether too much perpetual-catching-of-trains, or too much taking-it-aisy, is, on the whole, the wiser course, and the less insane interpretation of the purport and uses of life. I fear I am not an impartial judge ; for, when I continually hear the Irish upbraided with sitting on gates or walls and doing nothing, I remember that some of us in England likewise sit on gates and walls and do nothing, and are greatly addicted to that pastime. But whether taking-it-aisy, or forever trying to beat the record, be the best use to make of life, certain it is that the English, speaking generally, hold the one theory, and the Irish, speaking generally, hold the other, and manifest little or no intention of abandoning it. Unfortunately, Englishmen are not satisfied with being allowed to hold their own view of life. For the life of us we cannot help trying to force it on the acceptance of other people ; and if they prove recalcitrant, we at once regard them as inferior, because they are different from ourselves. Our religion, our manners, our morals, our way of conducting business, our pace, our goal, are ours, and therefore must be the best. No doubt it is this masterful narrowness that makes us an imperial and a conquering race. But should we not do well to interpret *parcere subiectis* as including some consideration for the conceptions of life and duty entertained by the peoples we have annexed ? Failing to do so, we find ourselves baffled all the same. There is a feminine power of passive resistance in the Celtic race which all our masculine Saxon imperiousness has not overcome. The Virgilian *curis acuens mortalia corda* applies but imperfectly to the majority of the Irish people, who quietly refuse to be prodded and sharpened into exertion beyond a certain point, let heaven send them what cares and difficulties it may. No doubt

an agricultural people always take life more easily than a manufacturing people. One cannot well live habitually in the presence and within the influence of nature without imbibing and finally imitating something of her deliberation and serene patience. Man may increase the pace of his machine-made wheels and pistons, but he cannot compel or induce nature to go any faster. Neither, beyond a certain point which is soon reached, can he force her to be more wealth-producing, as the most recent results of high farming plainly show. The bulk of the Irish people are bred on and wedded to the soil, the air, the seasons, the weather, mist, hail, sunshine, and snow; and familiarity and co-operation with these help to deepen that pious Christian fatalism which is innate in their temperament. Therefore they work in moderation, and with long rests between whiles,—rest perhaps, not absolutely needed by the physical frame, but akin to that passiveness which Wordsworth somewhere calls wise. Compare an ordinary English or Scotch with an ordinary Irish railway station, and the contrast is most striking. In the latter there is a total absence of fuss, bustle, expedition, and of a desire to get the trains off as summarily as possible. Even the railway porters are of opinion that there is plenty of time between this and the Day of Judgment in which to get life's rather unimportant business done, after a fashion.

After leaving Kilkee, I was so anxious to get to Killarney, and to get there quickly, in order that we might enjoy the sharp and sudden contrast between the barren grandeur of Clare and the leafy loveliness of Kerry, that, had it not been for the foregoing reflections, prompted by the splendid but sailless Shannon, I might perhaps have been impatient at the railway dispensation which forbade us to get farther that night than Tralee. But abiding by the true traveller's motto,—

Levius fit patientia
Quidquid corrigere est nefas, —

I am sure Horace learned that little bit of wisdom, not in Rome, but at his Sabine farm—we congratulated ourselves on the easy-goingness which permitted us to have tea and a couple of hours at Listowel, to saunter towards sundown by the banks of the salmon-haunted Feale, and to gaze at what is left upon its banks of the last stronghold that held out against Elizabeth in the Desmond insurrection.

Spring never arrayed herself in beauty more captivatingly childlike than on the mid-May morning when we arrived at Killarney. She had been weeping, half in play, half for penitance; but now she had put all her tears away, or had glorified what was left of them with radiating sunshine. Was it April? Was it May? Was it June? It seemed all three. But indeed every month keeps reminiscences of the one that precedes, and cherishes anticipations of the one that is to follow it.

Fresh emeralds jewelled the bare brown mould,
And the blond sallow tasseled itself with gold;
The hive of the broom brimmed with honeyed dew,
And springtime swarmed in the gorse anew.

There is no such gorse in wealthy Britain as enriches the vernal season in Ireland. I had come to that conclusion from what I had seen in King's County, in Westmeath, and in Clare itself; but they in turn seemed poor in this opulent flower compared with the golden growth all about Mahony's Point and many another open space near Killarney Lake. Yet at the same time, here was

June blushing under her hawthorn veil.
For Ireland is the land of the white as well as of the black thorn. But indeed of what wild flower that grows, of what green tree that burgeons, of what shrub that blossoms, are not the shc'es and woods, and lanes, and meadows of Killarney the home? Such varied and vigorous vegetation I have seen no otherwhere; and when one has said that, one has gone far towards award-

ing the prize for natural beauty. But vegetation at once robust and graceful, is but the fringe and decoration of the loveliness of that enchanting district. The tender grace of wood and water is set in a framework of hills, now stern, now ineffably gentle, now dimpling with smiles, now frowning and rugged with impending storm, now muffled and mysterious with mist, only to gaze out on you again with clear and candid sunshine. Here the trout leaps, there the eagle soars, and there beyond the wild deer dash through the arbutus coverts, through which they have come to the margin of the lake to drink, and, scared by your footstep or your oar, are away back to crosiered bracken or heather-covered moorland. But the first, the final, the deepest and most enduring impression of Killarney is that of beauty unspeakably tender, which puts on at times a garb of grandeur and a look of awe only in order to heighten, by passing contrast, the sense of soft, insinuating loveliness. How the missel-thrushes sing, as well they may ! How the streams and runnels gurgle and leap and laugh ! For the sound of journeying water is never out of your ears, the feeling of the moist, the fresh, the vernal, never out of your heart. My companion agreed with me that there is nothing in England or Scotland as beautiful as Killarney, meaning by Killarney its lakes, its streams, its hills, its vegetation ; and if mountain, wood, and water, harmoniously blent, constitute the most perfect and adequate loveliness that nature presents, it surely must be owned that it has, all the world over, no superior. I suppose there is a time when tourists pass through Killarney. Happily it had not commenced when we were there. But I gathered that they come for but a brief season ; and a well-known resident and landowner, to whom we were indebted for much that added to the inevitable enjoyment of our visit, told me that he had in vain tried to provide himself with a few neighbors, by maintaining and even furnishing some most attractive and charmingly placed dwellings on his

estate. It is so far away, so remote from London. And then—it is Ireland.

To portray scenery by language is not possible, often as thefeat has been attempted in our time. The utmost one can do is to convey an impression of beauty, or grandeur, or picturesqueness ; and one could only use familiar epithets and adjectives to but little purpose, were one to attempt to depict in words what one saw on Long Island, at Muckross Abbey, at Torc Waterfall, in the Lower Lake, the Upper Lake, the Long Range, or what one gazed out on at Glena Cottage, where we found tea and Irish slim-cakes provided for us in a sitting-room silently eloquent of the taste and refinement of its absent mistress. Equally futile would it be to try to describe the eight hours' drive from Killarney to Glengarriff by Kenmare Bay. I can only say to everybody, "Do not die without taking it." As for Glengarriff, I scarcely know how any one who goes there ever leaves it. For my part, I have been there ever since. It is a haven of absolute beauty and perfect rest.

I came to the conclusion at last that the reason why, though Ireland is more beautiful still than Britain, it is less travelled in and less talked about, is that it has never produced a great poet, a great painter, or even a great novelist,—I mean one who has sung or depicted the beauties of Ireland so as to excite general enthusiasm about them. *Carent rite sacro.* The crowd have not been bewitched into going to Ireland ; and indeed, if they went, the crowd would never discover loveliness for themselves, or at least never apprehend its relation to other loveliness. I hope I shall not give offence to a race I greatly admire, if I say that Irishmen do not seem to love Ireland as Englishmen love England, or Scotchmen Scotland. If Tom Moore had only loved Ireland as a poet should love his native land, he might have brought its extraordinary charm home to the world, and made its beauty universally known. I am sure the Vale of Cashmere is not lovelier than Innisfallen and all that

surrounds it ; but for want of intimate affection he wrote of both in precisely the same strain and style, insensible to local color, local form, local character, and in each case satisfying himself and asking us to be satisfied with vague dulcet adjectives and melodious generalities. But in truth I doubt whether the Irish are a poetical people, in the higher sense. They have plenty of fancy, but little or no imagination ; and it is imagination that gives to thought, feeling, and sentiment about a country a local habitation and a name. The Irish are both too inaccurate and too sad to produce poetry of the impressive and influencing sort. The groundwork of the highest imagination is close attention to and clear apprehension of the fact, which imagination may then, if it chooses, glorify and transfigure as it will. To the typical Irishman of whom I am speaking, the fact, the precise fact, seems unimportant. He never looks at it, he never grasps it ; therefore he exaggerates or curtails,—the statement he makes to you, and indeed the one he makes to himself, being either in excess or in diminution of the reality. I am aware that, according to the habitual conception of many persons, perhaps of most, exaggeration and imagination are one and the same thing, or at any rate closely akin. There could not be a more complete error. Not only are they not akin, they are utterly alien to each other. Fancy exaggerates or invents. Imagination perceives and transfigures.

Equally common is the belief, more especially in days when pessimism is a creed with some and a fashion with others, that poetry and sadness are not only closely but inseparably related ; and up to a certain point, and within a certain range of poetry, but necessarily a lower and a narrower one, that is true. Much beautiful lyrical and elegiac verse do we owe to sadness ; but it is unequal to the task of inspiring and sustaining the loftier flights of the poetic imagination. The Athenians were not sad. The Italians are not sad. The Germans are not sad. The English are not sad. They are serious,

which is a totally different thing ; and, as I have ventured to assert, the Irish character, though sad, is noticeably wanting in seriousness. Be it observed too, in passing, that serious people are accurate — I mean, of course, as far as human infirmity will permit. But as regards poetry and sadness, did not Euripides long ago say, in "*The Suppliants*," that it is well the poet should produce songs with joy ; and did he not ask how, if the poet have it not, he can communicate delight to others ? The joy here spoken of is not a violent or spasmodic joy, which is own brother to sadness, but a serene and temperate joy, such as Tennyson had in his mind when he wrote concerning the poet : —

He saw through life and death, through
good and ill,
He saw through his own soul.

I was again struck by the superiority of Irish scenery to its reputation, when, passing round from west to south, I found myself on the Blackwater. What Englishman has not seen Warwick Castle, and to whom are its romantic position and imposing aspect not household talk ? How many Englishmen have seen, or even heard of, Lismore ? To my surprise and shame, I suddenly discovered that Lismore—concerning which, I will be bound to say, most persons, if interrogated, would reply, "Lismore ? Lismore ? It belongs to the Duke of Devonshire, does it not ?" — is much more beautiful than Warwick, and almost as picturesque. It was my good fortune to spend several days in a most charming and hospitable house, whose spacious grounds slope gradually down to the Blackwater, where that noble stream is a quarter of a mile broad ; passing on one side the ruined Castle of Tourin, and on the other the woods of Dromana, through which I galloped—as only Irish horses will gallop over rough and uneven ground—for the better part of two hours, without coming to the end of them. What strikes one in Ireland is the abundance of everything, the "lots to spare," what Irish people call

"lashins." Flower-garden, kitchen-garden, pleasure-garden alike, are invariably much larger in Ireland in proportion to the size of the domain than in England. An Irish acre is about the very least anybody apparently has ever troubled himself to enclose for vegetables and fruit; and frequently this handsome allowance is exceeded where, from the domestic conditions, you would have thought it considerably in excess of the needs of the family. This superfluous and prodigal assignment of space frequently leads to a good deal of untidiness; but Irish people seem to prefer waste places and neglected corners to prim parsimoniousness. But it must not be supposed that all establishments in Ireland are untidy and uncared-for. I saw several gardens, not only near Dublin,—like Lady Ardilaun's beautiful one of St. Ann's at Clontarf,—but in the most remote and rustic parts of Ireland, that would hold their own against the best-kept ones in England. In the grounds of the house on the Blackwater to which I have alluded, I found the most effective spring-garden I ever saw,—the Irish climate being peculiarly favorable to spring and early summer gardening, where man seconds with any pains the bounty and geniality of nature. One must go to the most favored spots in the south of Devonshire to meet, in England, with such flowering shrubs, such rhododendrons, such out-door azaleas as abound all over the west, the south, and even the east of Ireland. At the same time, with Irish gardens and gardening, as with most other Irish things, "taking-it-aisy" is the general law. The result is far from being always disastrous, where neglect and unkemptness have not been carried too far. Many a fair and precious flower is coddled and "titivated" out of existence in these trim and orderly days; and I shrewdly suspect that the greater part of the old-fashioned herbaceous plants which have recently come into favor with all of us, and which had died out in most parts of England, have been brought over from Irish gardens, where they

have always flourished undisturbed and unsuperseded. I can say for myself that I am indebted to the sister island for several new, otherwise old, herbaceous flowers; for, as we all know, Irish people are never happier than when they are giving what they have got.

I wish this love of flowers, which educated folk in Ireland exhibit in so marked a manner, was felt by its peasantry. Could their whitewashed cottages but have little gardens in front of them, instead of what they call "the street," which consists of a dung-hill-tenanted bit of roughly paved, and not always paved, ground that abuts on the road; could they be got to plant creepers against their walls, to cherish a climbing rose, to embower their porches in honeysuckle, Ireland would, as if by enchantment, be an utterly transformed country to travel in. But just as its people, in many respects so gifted, have little imagination, so have they little feeling for beauty. After leaving the country of the Blackwater, I found a warm welcome in Queen's County from one who is indeed a Lady Bountiful, and well known as such, and who is doing her utmost to get the peasantry to understand the charm and the refining influence of flowers, just as she has employed almost every known method for adding to the grace and dignity, as well as to the material comfort, of their lives. If she succeeds, as I fervently hope she may, she will indeed have been a benefactress to the people among whom she lives, and who, I could perceive, are not insensible to her large, catholic, and unostentatious interest in them. I had always imagined that Kent has no superior as a home for wild flowers. But all that I know at home of floral woodland beauty fades into insignificance when compared with the miles on miles of bluebells, under secular timber of every kind, through which she led me on the evening of my arrival. At last I saw Fairy Land, not with the mind's eye but with the bodily vision; and not for days did the color of that seemingly endless tract of wildwood hyacinths

fade from the retina. Here again was another, and perhaps the most surprising, instance of the lavishness, the abundance of everything in Ireland, of which I have spoken, and the complete ignorance of Englishmen of what Ireland has to show them in the way of natural and cultivated beauty, which they are supposed, and not unjustly, to love so dearly.

No country is beautiful throughout, but I cannot agree with the opinion I have heard expressed so frequently that the centre of Ireland is ugly. For my part, I have yet to see an ugly country where it still remains country; and I cannot understand how any rural tract can be otherwise than enchanting to the eye that has ample color in the foreground and the middle distance, and boasts a mountain horizon. Alike in Queen's County, in King's County, and in Westmeath, the Slieve Bloom Mountains are rarely out of sight; and I observed more than once, in the light and shade of their ample folds, effects of color such as I had hitherto seen only in Italy. I spent a delightful morning, wandering tracklessly and aimlessly over a portion of the Bog of Allen, which strongly reminded me of the wetter portions of the Yorkshire moorlands familiar to my childhood. But apart altogether from the glamour of association, I saw in its color and in its character, in its heather, its bog-cotton, its bilberry leaves and blossoms, an effective and unusual contrast to the golden gorse, to the patches of green oats, to accidental clumps of timber, and to the irregular barrier of purple hill-land in the immaterial distance. It was pleasant to pay a visit to a property in that part of Ireland, the owner of which was, for thirty years of his manhood, engaged in administering the affairs of many millions of her Majesty's subjects in India, and who, now that in the course of nature he has come into his inheritance, spends his days, his pension, and his savings in improving "the old home" and developing his estate, instead of hanging about London clubs and trying to extract diversion out of the hackneyed

amusements of society. Will those who come after him do the same? Let us hope so; for what Ireland most wants is the presence, the love, and the encouragement of its own children. I found the majority of landowners with whom I talked in favor of the compulsory sale and purchase of holdings; and when I asked if they did not think this would finally deplete Ireland of its rural gentry, which would be a culminating curse to it, they one and all expressed the opinion that it would have no such effect, since the expropriated landlords would retain the house, the demesne, and what we call in England the home farm, and would live on excellent terms with the farmers and the peasantry, once the burning question of the tenure of land was extinguished.

It has frequently been said to me, when extolling the extraordinary beauty and natural charm of Ireland, "But what a climate! It rains incessantly." This assertion is one of the exaggerations incidental to ignorance or to very partial knowledge. Most persons of my acquaintance who live habitually in London abuse the English climate, which, I humbly venture to assert, is the best climate in the world. The climate is good, though the weather may sometimes be bad; just as in Italy and kindred countries, the weather is generally good, but the climate is usually the reverse of pleasant, being almost always either excessively hot or excessively cold, or, thanks to conflict between sun and wind, both one and the other at the same time. I cannot well conceive of an agreeable climate without a certain amount of rain. Londoners, who do not like to have their hats injured or their boots dirtied, and to whom the beauty of nature, as not being within sight, is a matter of complete indifference, consider the weather good when the pavements are clean and the sky cloudless. But that is a characteristically narrow view of the matter. It may be that Ireland has too much of a good thing in respect of rain. But there is a quality

of mercy in Irish showers, which are, for the most part, of the soft sort sent by southerly or westerly breezes. We had abundant sunshine at Killarney ; but I remember greatly enjoying a tramp in the rain one wet morning up to Aghadoe and Fossa. I cannot understand why people abuse rain as they do. It is one of the most beautiful, as well as one of the most precious, of nature's gifts. Watch it beginning to fall on the silvery water, making delicate fretwork of the dinted surface, which, as the rain comes faster, becomes a sheet of dancing diamonds. Then the watery spears slacken, and gradually cease to fall, and the lake resumes its silvery serenity as though nothing had happened. I say it rained that morning, and on into the early part of the afternoon ; and what a goodly sight were the young children, the girls especially, making haste homeward from school, with bare legs and bare heads, save that some of the girls cowled the latter with their picturesque shawls, lest they should be caught in another shower ! It might have rained all day, for anything I cared, after the comfort I had gleaned from the stockingless legs and unbonneted heads that went withal with comely garments and well-washed faces ; and I came to the conclusion that Irish rain is warm as an Irish welcome, and soft as an Irish smile. But by three o'clock—in Ireland the children leave school, I observed, at that early hour—the clouds melted into thin air ; and what Killarney then was for hour on hour, till the gloaming deepened into starlight, I shall never forget, but should vainly struggle to describe.

No eulogy of the attractions of Ireland would be complete that did not bear grateful testimony to the hospitality of its people, the example of which seems to be imitated even by those who go to live there only for a time. On first arriving at Dublin, anxious as I was to push on into the interior, I could not well reject the graceful welcome that kept me a willing prisoner for several days in a comely home, surrounded by a beauti-

ful garden and exquisite grounds, not far from the Vice-regal Lodge ; and on reaching the capital again on my way homeward, it was difficult to get away from the hearty hospitality of the brilliant soldier, himself an Irishman, who had just published the first instalment of that important biography on which he has for years been working, amid a thousand distractions of public duty, private friendship, and social intercourse, with characteristic tenacity ; and the popularity of which, added to the distinction its author has won as an active and successful soldier, justifies one in enrolling him among those *qui bus deorum munere datum est*—the original it will be remembered only says, *aut—facere scribenda, et scribere legenda.*

My parting exhortation, therefore, naturally is : "Go to Ireland, and go often. It is a delightful country to travel in. Doubtless the Irish have their faults ; I suppose we all have. Ireland never had, like England, like most of Scotland, like France, like Germany, like Spain, the advantage of Roman civilization and Roman discipline, by which their inhabitants are still influenced far more than they dream of. Ireland, no doubt, is a little undisciplined ; for it has remained tribal and provincial, with the defects as with the virtues of a tribal and clannish race. But the only way to enjoy either countries or people is to take them as they are, and not, when you travel, to carry your own *imprimatur* about with you. There is no true understanding without sympathy and love, and Ireland has not been loved enough by Englishmen, or by Irishmen either. The direst offence, however, against the duty they owe each other would be to sever or weaken the tie that subsists between them ; and I cannot help thinking it might be insensibly but effectually strengthened, and rendered more acceptable to both, if Englishmen would but make themselves more familiar with the charm of Irish scenery and Irish character.

I have said the Irish seem to be somewhat deficient in a sense of

beauty. Yet I noticed one gesture, one attitude, as common as the gorse itself, the gracefulness of which would be observed if one met with it even in Italy or Greece. As you drive along the rudest parts of Ireland, there will come to the open doorway of a ling-thatched hut a woman, bare-headed, bare-footed, very quiet and patient of mien, and she will raise her hand, and with it shade her eyes, while she gazes on you as you pass. Then she will return to the gloom of her narrow home. When I think of Ireland, now that I have visited it, I seem to see a solitary figure, that emerges at moments from a settled twilight of its own to gaze, but with shaded eyes, at the excessive glare and unquestionable march of English progress.

ALFRED AUSTIN.

From Longman's Magazine.

THE APOSTLE OF PORT ROYAL.

Par divers moyens on arrive à pareille fin.
MONTAIGNE.

DENIS DE L'ISLE, the runaway monk, looking down upon the convent of Port Royal des Champs, blessed the Providence which had brought him to so desirable a haven. The summer sun burned upon the summit of the hills that inclosed the valley on all sides save the east ; but the trim gardens and sumptuous buildings of the nunnery lay in a cool blue shadow ; the bells, chiming to vespers, made a peaceful music ; a lazy spiral of smoke curled from the kitchen chimney ; and the wayfarer, leg-weary, hungry, and athirst, descended the hillside filled with the most comfortable anticipations.

All this time France was ringing with the exploits of King Henry of Navarre, who had lately entered Paris in triumph ; and Denis de l'Isle was on his way to the capital in the hope of obtaining a place about the court. Within a few leagues of his destination, the adventurer found himself somewhat ragged and almost penni-

less ; yet it was highly necessary that he should enter the city in some more taking guise than that of a starveling monk. Port Royal des Champs was richly endowed, and the nuns bore a reputation for some frivolity of conversation. Hence the convent appeared to Denis a singularly attractive house of entertainment, and by the time he reached the entrance he had made and unmade a thousand ingenious plans of spoliation.

The porter was absent from the gatehouse, and the doors stood open to all comers — a negligence which went far to confirm the monk in his pleasing belief as to an habitual laxity of discipline. He entered the courtyard, which was empty save for the pigeons ; in front of him rose the tall buttresses and traceried windows of the chapel, and in the angle formed by the junction of the courtyard wall with that of the transept an oaken door stood open. Passing through it, Denis found himself in the Strangers' Burying Ground, an oblong inclosure with an archway in the farther wall, through which he could see (like a picture set in a frame) the nuns in their white habits walking to and fro in the cloister garden. In the centre of the square inclosure stood a great stone cross, upon the steps of which a little figure was sitting in an attitude of meditation, her graceful outline strongly relieved against the black shadows of the cloister arcading beyond. As the monk paused in the doorway she looked up, rose, and came towards him, and Denis saw to his surprise that she was scarcely older than a child.

"Pardon me, my father," she said with dignity, "but strangers are not permitted to enter the cloisters. Follow me, if you please."

Denis, he knew not why, was plunged by this unexpected greeting into an extreme embarrassment. Beside this dainty little nun he felt rude, unkempt, and clumsy ; and he walked silently behind her like a schoolboy detected in a trespass. It was not until his guide had ushered him into the reception-room provided for vis-

itors that he plucked up courage to thank her for her courtesy, at the same time requesting her to acquaint the mother superior with the arrival of a friar who craved a night's hospitality.

"I am the mother superior, and Port Royal welcomes you, as she doth all strangers, but especially those of the household of Holy Church," said the little nun glibly, as if repeating a phrase learned by rote. "I will go and tell Father Jehan you are come," she added, her manner suddenly changing to that of ordinary intercourse. "He will ask you to sup with him, and invite you to preach to-morrow. Do you like preaching?"

"Why, as to that," said Denis, set a little more at ease, "I think it likely that I discover more pleasure in that exercise than doth the congregation."

"That is what I have always thought to myself," returned the abbess eagerly. "Oh, I would dearly love to preach!"

"And I to hear you," said Denis politely.

"You are a strange monk," remarked the abbess, looking at him curiously. "You are not like Father Jehan, nor the friars who come sometimes."

"Perhaps I am not a monk at all," he returned. "What would you say to that?"

"I had a dream once," she said, still staring absently at him, "and now it comes into my mind that perhaps you are the man."

"And what was the dream?" asked Denis, somewhat taken aback.

But a fit of shyness fell upon the abbess; she took refuge in her character of mother superior, and murmuring that she would despatch a servant to minister to the holy father's wants, she withdrew abruptly, leaving the monk to contend with some emotions new to his experience.

It was no uncommon practice in those days for an influential family, in order to keep the disposal of the property in their own hands, to place a mere child at the head of a great establishment such as Port Royal.

Denis was naturally aware of this custom, and that his youthful hostess should occupy so exalted a position did not strike him as exceptional; but something in the personality of the demure and ingenuous maiden captivated him at a blow. He was inspired all at once with an overmastering desire to find favor in her eyes.

Denis supped that night with Father Jehan the chaplain, a little, old, red gentleman with a puckered face, and a voice that sounded as though its owner were always on the point of tears. After requesting Denis to preach on the morrow (a compliment invariably accorded in those days by the monastic clergy to their ecclesiastical visitors) and receiving his assent, Father Jehan displayed an insatiable appetite for news of the great world outside the convent policies. Denis related all he knew, and more, till what with the wine and the talk his senior's face began to shine, and he grew happy and expansive as a child.

"If all I have heard be true, brother," Denis hinted presently, "the sisters of Port Royal find time between orisons and visiting the poor for gayer employments."

"Eh, you come a little too late, young man," replied the confessor, cocking an eyebrow. "Since they put a chit of a girl over the heads of her elders there has been a wonderful improvement in godliness. She seems to impart a taste for piety without intending it. And why not, I say, for Mère Angélique is a worthy little child at heart, and as easy as an old shoe about the discipline. When you come to carry my weight, brother, you'll find the benefit of judicious forbearance."

"Is she, then, so terribly *dévote*?" inquired Denis.

"She takes to religion as you and I to—*to wine, brother*," said the chaplain. "Or would, did I allow it. Fill up and pass the bottle. But I don't."

"Why not?" Denis asked.

"Jehan sum, non Paulus," replied his host sleepily; and indeed at the moment the excellent confessor much more resembled the heathen god Sile-

nus than any member of the Christian hierarchy.

But Denis had obtained the clue he wanted; did he desire to gain the favor of the abbess, it was clear that he must pose as an apostle. He abandoned some alluring projects with a sigh, and resolved, since so it must be, to clothe himself for the nonce in garments of light. So bidding Father Jehan good-night, he repaired to his lodging, and sat down to compose an oration for the morrow. Brother Denis had a poetic spark in his constitution; he could wield the spell of language; a born opportunist, he would denounce vanity in a sermon, or improvise a ballad in praise of folly, with equal sincerity and conviction. Thus by the time his discourse was complete, he was so sensibly affected by his own exhortations, that had he been a martyr condemned to execution at sunrise, this remarkable zealot could not have lain down to sleep in a more fervent glow of pious enthusiasm.

The Chapel of Port Royal in later years echoed to the eloquence of the greatest divines in France; but its walls never rang with a more stirring admonition than that delivered by the vagrant monk next morning. He had, as it were, laid a wager with himself to compel the admiration of the slender girl who sat beneath the foliated canopy of the abbess's throne, listening with such a rapt attention. But intent as he was upon this enterprise, he took careful note (while Father Jehan gabbled a perfunctory mass) of the rich ornaments and furniture of the sanctuary; for from amongst the profusion of gifts upon the altar he must pick the corner-stone of his fortune's edifice. Brother Denis would have been well advised had he then and there seized an opportunity to hide the golden and bejewelled pyx under his frock and made good his escape. But the desire of seeing Mère Angélique once more was too strong for him, and after wandering about the precincts for hours in the hope of meeting her, the monk found himself in the ambulatory, a broad pathway running between the

north wall of the convent and the fish-ponds, beneath an avenue of great trees. On the farther side of the pool the woods climbed the hillside into the sky, so that the still water held a reflected forest, where fish swam among the branches. Presently a door in the wall opened, and a thrill shook Denis as he saw Mère Angélique step from the sunlit garden into the green shade. She hesitated a moment, and then advanced timidly towards him. Her face was pale, and disfigured with the marks of tears. The monk felt instinctively that their relative positions were reversed. He had gained his ignoble wager.

"What ails you, my daughter?" he said kindly. "Are you in trouble?"

"In great trouble of mind, father," she answered; and the tones of her voice told of such distress that the monk's heart smote him. "I would make you my confessor, for I am sore in need of absolution and ghostly counsel. Like a great light your words have illumined the darkness of my heart, and discovered my sin to me."

Denis perceived that he had overshot his mark. He had proposed to himself to act a part extremely opposed to that of father confessor, and thus his plans again suffered an unforeseen reverse. So he constrained himself to listen, marvelling at the extraordinary refinement of conscience revealed in such a relation, and wondering what he was to say to it all. To treat the whole matter lightly would be to step down from his pedestal, while to deal strictly with such a penitent was more than he could do. He decided upon compromise, and, telling the abbess he would set her a fitting penance on the morrow (by which time the confessor resolved he would be some miles on the road to Paris), he gave her absolution.

But when, consoled and happy as a forgiven child, she had left him, Denis lingered till the bats began to squeak in the twilight, and the moon, peering over the rim of the hills, flung a track of gold upon the water. The monk stood and looked at that shining path-way. Should he follow the gleam of

gold across the water and over the hills to unknown glories ? Or should he stay and make his abode in that remote and quiet valley, under the rule of the charming little abbess ? When he retired for the night, his heated imagination wove a series of brilliant pictures before his eyes, and he fell asleep in a state of miserable indecision. But next morning Denis awoke at dawn, with his brain clear, and the wheels of his mind running as if they had been oiled. He reviewed the position at a glance, and made his decision. Between matins and prime the church would be empty ; here was his opportunity ; what childish folly to fling it away for a passing fancy ! And as the rising sun washed the pinnacles of the chapel with gold, Denis hurried across the sleeping courtyard, and entered the building by the door in the north transept. The place held so deep a silence that his very breathing sounded loud and harsh ; he stole to the gate in the iron grille that shut off the transept from the body of the church, opened it cautiously, and paused, struck motionless on the threshold. The tapers burned, dots of pale orange, upon the altar ; high above them a strong beam of sunlight slanted through the great east window, making a broad, misty radiance alive with dancing atoms ; the jewelled gewgaws gleamed darkly behind the altar lights ; but between them and the monk knelt Mère Angélique, absorbed in devotion. All the adventurer's cunning resolutions went suddenly out of his head. Crossing silently to the suppliant figure he touched her on the shoulder.

"Peace be to you, my daughter," he said gently. She started and turned with a faint cry ; then a shade of disappointment fell swiftly across her bright face.

"Ah, my father, is it you !" she said quickly. "I had thought it the Christ himself," she added under her breath. "I have been praying so hard all night that he would show me some token of his favor—but, alas ! his heaven is fast shut."

The pathos in her voice pierced the

masquerader's susceptible heart. He knelt down and put his arm round her.

"Ay," he said, "the heaven is shut, but never grieve for that, *chére !* I was a monk once, and I tell you this religion is all a dream."

She drew herself away, gazing at him in bewilderment.

"A dream !" she said. "A dream ! In my dream I saw you standing in the cloister doorway, and upon your forehead was God's seal, I thought. What is it you are saying ? I do not understand."

"Come away with me, Angélique," cried the reckless Denis. "Come out into the brave world beyond these gloomy walls. There is feasting and fighting, making love and marrying—there life marches gaily to music down a road bestrewn with flowers. Will you stay forever in this miserable sepulchre ? Will you waste your beauty in fruitless prayer and fasting ? You will find the true God out-of-doors in the sunshine, *chére !*"

Mère Angélique stared at him, horror dawning in her eyes. She had risen while Denis was speaking, and he stood in front of her, holding her hands. But when he paused she wrenched herself away from him.

"Oh," she cried, "how can you talk so wickedly ? I think you must be the Devil ! Or perhaps you are only trying my faith. Oh, say you are only trying my faith," she pleaded pitifully.

Denis hesitated a moment. The child's words opened a last avenue of escape from the consequences of his folly. With a stout effort he regained command over himself, and his mobile countenance changed instantly to an expression of solemnity.

"My daughter," he said gravely, "thou hast rightly guessed. Did I not tell thee I would inflict a penance ? Behold, it is accomplished ! *Absolvo te.*"

Mère Angélique, completely unstrung, startled the monk by falling at his feet in a passion of tears.

"Then it is true, after all ; and thou art the messenger I saw in my dream,"

she sobbed. "Thou hast shown me the hidden path of righteousness, my father, and I will try—I will try to walk therein."

"That is well. Give me thine hand—so," said Denis, raising her. "Now dry thy tears, and I would counsel thee to seek rest until noonsong. Adieu, my daughter. *Dieu vous bénisse!*"

The little abbess bestowed upon him a look of childlike gratitude that the monk remembered all his shifty life; and still shaken with weeping, but serenely happy, she walked slowly away from him down the church. Denis, left alone upon the altar steps, stood gazing after her until the door, clang-ing heavily, hid her from his sight. The sound dismally struck upon his heart, arousing a sense of loss and discomfiture. Then he turned wistfully to the tempting wealth upon the altar, and shook his head with a wry face.

"Comes a maiden, and all a man's plans are upset one by one," he murmured. "To rob a church—*fi donc!* how inconsistent with the rôle of an apostle. No, one cannot have everything. Denis de l'Isle comes as a thief and a robber; and lo! he must shine as a saint, and depart in a halo of sanctity. Ignatius Loyola himself could do no more. And it would be a thousand pities to risk again the disillusion of *la belle Angélique*. I will flee temptation—*mais, mon Dieu, que je demeure sot en trois lettres!*"

Ten minutes later, Mère Angélique, kneeling at her open casement, watched the figure of a monk walk swiftly down the white road into the rosy sunrise, and dwindle out of sight upon the brightness.

And is it not written in the chronicles of Port Royal des Champs how the establishment of austere discipline, from which resulted the lofty reputation for piety enjoyed ever afterwards by the sisters, dated from the visit of a stranger who preached a most wonderful sermon and then vanished away, no one knew whither?

L. COPE CORNFORD.

From The Sunday Magazine.

DWARF NEGROES OF THE ANDAMAN ISLANDS.

BY WILLIAM C. PRESTON.

WHEN the Indian Mutiny of 1857 had been suppressed and justice over-took some of its principal instigators, it may be remembered that the mutinous Sepoy regiment was condemned to be transported to the Andaman Islands, in the Bay of Bengal. The men were horror-stricken. They would much rather have been shot. And no won-der. It seemed, indeed, that their fate would be terrible. The islands were not far away; barely six hundred miles from the Húgli mouth of the Ganges, but little was known of them except that they were inhabited by a race of murderous savages, and that the mala-rious climate made health impossible and speedy death certain. Marco Polo had written, "The people are without a king and are idolaters, and no better than wild beasts. And I assure you all the men of this Angamanain have heads like dogs, and teeth and eyes likewise; in fact, in the face they are just like big mastiff dogs! They have a quantity of spices; but they are a most cruel generation and eat everybody they can catch, if not of their own race." Arab geographers had described the Andamanese as "Savages who eat men alive; who go naked and have no boats—if they had they would devour all who pass near."

Such were the accepted traditions in regard to these dreaded islands. The Sepoys may never have heard them in the exact form in which they have been quoted, but the prevailing notions had been formed by such reports, and in all probability the popular imagina-tion had exaggerated their horrors.

Still more likely they had heard dreadful tales concerning the Indian convicts who had been sent there long years before. As early as 1789 the Bengal government had established in the Andamans a convict settlement and a harbor of refuge for ships blown out of their course; but, as Sir William Hunter tells us, for seven years the settlement struggled against the deadly

malaria of the jungles, the arrows of the natives, and the failure of supplies from the mainland, until, in 1796, the Indian government found itself compelled to bring away the remnant and to abandon the colony. For half a century they did not venture to renew the attempt, and the Andamans appear in the records only as a cluster of cannibal islands, peopled with fierce, fish-eating tribes, who promptly killed the savant who had been sent to study their natural history, cut off the stragglers from two troop vessels that had gone ashore, and murdered shipwrecked crews. It was atrocities like these that at length forced upon the government, in 1855, the re-occupation of the islands, and determined them, a little later, to re-establish the convict colony by deporting thither the prisoners left by the Mutiny. The prospect for these wretched men was an appalling one, and might well make them wish rather for death.

Happily, the prospect was worse than the reality, although that proved stern enough. In the aborigines themselves there has been little change, even to the present day. Except in the matter of literal color, they are not quite so black as they have been painted, but they are, for the most part, as savage, as unfriendly, and as unapproachable as ever. Notwithstanding this, thanks to the excellent government under which the islands have been placed for the last five-and-thirty years, they are not only habitable by the convict settlers but have attractions and advantages not to be despised. A German traveller, Mr. Otto E. Ehlers, had an opportunity not long ago of spending a month in these islands, and his observations, made under specially favorable conditions, both of the settlers and of the aborigines, furnish us with much interesting information.

But first, a word should be said about the islands themselves. We have indicated their position generally as being about six hundred miles — to be strictly accurate, five hundred and ninety — from the Hugli mouth of the Ganges.

They are still nearer to the coast of Burmah, being one hundred and sixty miles from Cape Negrais, and consist of the Great and Little Andaman groups, surrounded by a number of smaller islands. The Great Andaman group, one hundred and fifty-six miles in length, and twenty miles in breadth, comprises three large islands — the Northern, the Middle, and the Southern Andamans — separated from each other by two narrow straits not much wider than the Seine at Paris. About thirty miles to the south lies the Little Andaman group, thirty miles long and seventeen miles wide. The settlement with which we are now concerned is on the east coast of the southern island of Great Andaman, at Port Blair, which is situated at the head of a fine inlet of the sea, forming one of the most magnificent natural harbors in the world, nine miles in length, in which half the British navy could ride. Across the mouth of the harbor lies Ross Island, a picturesque and rocky islet, the capital of the settlement, on which stands the Government House and the principal storehouses.

Before reaching this point the steamer has to thread its way through a host of these small islets, and as some of them rise to a great height and are clothed to their summits with gorgeous verdure, the scene is one not soon to be forgotten. The admiration of the visitor is intensified as he approaches Ross Island. It is surrounded by a girdle of cocoa-palms close to the sea, which overshadows a well-kept promenade running all round the little island. Between groups of trees beyond peep pretty bungalows and pleasant gardens, stretching away to the hills, on which stand the residence of the chief commissioner and the castle-like barracks, wherein the small military force required for the protection and government of the settlement is accommodated.

As Mr. Ehlers stood on this island, looking across to the settlement, he was enchanted. "All about me," he says, "gently swayed to and fro by the morning breeze, were cocoanut palms,

mangoes, acacias, and other tropical trees, and beyond the deep blue stretch of water, majestic, calm, the opposite island, shining in emerald green, over twelve hundred feet high."

There was not much, truly, to suggest the idea of a penal settlement, or to account for the horror which the criminals felt at the thought of being banished hither. The world could scarcely show a fairer spot. Lord Mayo, standing on the summit of Mount Harriet, the loftiest eminence on South Andaman, in 1872, pronounced the view unsurpassed in his experience, and predicted a great future for the Andaman settlements. As he came down from that survey he was assassinated at the foot of the hill, and the tragic incident made what were almost his last words especially memorable.

This very luxuriance of vegetation, however, so beautiful as a feature of the landscape, is itself an element of dread. Sir William Hunter, speaking of the numerous little hills as mostly covered with jungle, quotes, with evident approval, the remark : " scarcely to be equalled for its density and unhealthiness in any part of the Eastern world." It is charming to read of the graceful forest trees shooting up to a height of more than a hundred feet ; of large clumps of bamboos from thirty to thirty-five feet high ; of abounding palms ; of banian, and almond, and ebony, and *sundri*, and poplar, and red-wood, and iron-tree mixing in beautiful confusion with the cotton-trees and pines and arborescent euphorbias ; but then we read of pestilential swamps between the hills, and although they give shelter to the loveliest orchids, they are pestilential still. The jungle is impenetrable to man and beast, by reason of the dense undergrowth and the innumerable creepers that stretch from tree to tree, and here are bred malarious exhalations which steal slowly over the islands, and are more fatal and terrible by far than the arrows and spears of savage men.

But this unhealthiness is fast disappearing with the removal of its cause.

Swamp reclamation and forest clearing are being carried on with great energy, careful medical supervision is organized, and, although the climate of the islands must always be moist, seeing that they are exposed to the full force of the south-west monsoon, the Andamans, at least in the hilly districts, will compare favorably, for salubrity, with almost any tropical regions.

Mr. Ehlers's admiration of the scenery as he approached the island was not greater than his surprise at what he saw on landing. "I must admit," he says, "that I had a different idea of a criminal colony. I thought of the rattle of chains, of poorly fed prisoners carefully guarded by soldiers with bayonets, and warders with the cat-o'-nine-tails ; and, instead, I found these prisoners happy-looking, clean, enjoying perfect liberty ; employed in the offices as clerks or storekeepers, or in the houses of the Europeans as cooks, gardeners, night-watchmen, and, indeed, following all sorts of occupations."

This, of course, must apply only to those, who by years of good behavior have proved their partial reformation, and shown that they are to be trusted. After all, the Andamans are not to be looked upon as a paradise for criminals, but as a sphere where an enlightened government is seeking to make punishment at once retributive and reformatory, and where its experiment is conspicuously succeeding. A large proportion of the criminals are employed in swamp-draining, forest-clearing, stone-breaking, building, and similar heavy and arduous work. By degrees, if they do well, they bring about a better condition of things for themselves, until at length their punishment is simply their exile, and even this is preferred by many to a return to their own land. And so it comes to pass that in every grade of service, both in and out of doors, scarcely any but criminals are to be met with. Even the band, which played every afternoon on the promenade, was, we are told, entirely composed of criminals ; and in most of the

households of the officers, the whole of the servants, from the butler down to the kitchen-boy, consisted of murderers, who, for some reason, which we are left to conjecture, are always preferred to house-breakers, thieves, and robbers.

At the time of Mr. Ehlers's visit in 1891, the convict population numbered 12,197, of whom 8,075 were murderers, 44 poison-mixers, 1,841 robbers, 502 burglars, and the rest evil-doers of many varieties.

In making a choice of servants among these numerous classes, probably the last person we should select for cook would be a professional poison-mixer; yet one of these was actually the *chef* of the officers' mess. He had the great recommendation that he cooked very well indeed, and "his other small faults were forgiven so long as he abstained from using arsenic and other poisonous ingredients in his sauces."

These people all give the impression of being well nourished and well treated, and they receive pay up to three shillings a month for their work so long as they behave themselves. After ten years of good conduct they receive a few acres of land, which they have to cultivate. Out of their earnings they buy in course of time a little house and possibly a cow or two, or a few goats, and live — apart from being always under police supervision and liable to be put back to forced labor in case they do not behave properly — as free people. They pay a nominal rent for the land and sell such produce as they do not need for their own requirements to the governor of the colony.

These are known as self-supporting convicts, and there were at the time of which we write above twenty-five hundred men belonging to this class, each one of whom, had they not been self-supporting, would have cost the government from £10 to £15 a year. It is therefore, on economical grounds, obviously advisable to give them facilities for becoming self-reliant; and as a further encouragement they are not only permitted to marry any of the

female convicts who have likewise gained promotion, but, under special circumstances, if they were married before, they are allowed to have their wives and families brought over, and the education of the children is very effectively cared for in several schools of the colony.

Although the majority devote themselves to agricultural pursuits, some are otherwise inclined, and such are allowed to follow any occupation they prefer; so that amongst the 2,590 male self-supporters there were, besides 1,724 farmers, artisans of all descriptions, commercial assistants, apothecaries' or chemists' assistants, and domestic servants. The women are employed in household service generally, and as nurses, seamstresses, char-women, and the like.

The original mutineers, as will be supposed, have nearly all died out, but the colony is replenished from the gaols of Bengal, Madras, Bombay, and British Burmah. Most of the convicts, or about seventy-seven per cent., are life prisoners, the remainder being time convicts. Few, however, even of those sent to the Andamans for life, are detained more than twenty years, except the poison-mixers, who may well be regarded as a particularly dangerous class, and the absolutely incorrigible. Nevertheless, a proportion of them get on so well and become so attached to the place that they prefer to end their days there as free people.

Attempts at flight are hopeless. If any escape into the interior of the island they are invariably either killed by the natives or brought back by them for the reward which they know they may always depend upon receiving. It has now and then happened, in the course of years, that a few convicts have constructed rafts and drifted out to sea in the hope of being picked up by some passing ship, or of reaching, by good fortune, the mainland. It is even admitted that perhaps one in a thousand may have accomplished this, but their success has been a miracle and nearly all who make the venture perish miserably. A few years ago

three Burmese evaded the vigilance of their guards and set out, but they were caught again, after six days, in an almost starving condition. Another raft was found some distance out at sea with the dead body of a convict tied to it.

About six miles higher up the harbor is Viper Island, which is reserved mainly as a punishment station for the most abandoned and refractory of the convicts. But neither from this circumstance nor from its name must the inference be drawn that it is, in its natural features, less attractive than other parts of the Andamans. It reminded Mr. Ehlers of Monaco, with its well-kept, gradually rising gardens, and, standing out from the green, the brightly painted police station, built somewhat in the form of a mosque. The way up to the prison is by a winding road, hedged by trees of splendid foliage and here and there giving a view of exquisite beauty over the sapphire waves of the harbor. He found the convicts busy breaking stone, grinding corn, pressing cocoanut oil, and engaged in similar occupations. In some places are villages wholly occupied by the self-supporting convicts, who carry on indigo factories, and cultivate tea, coffee, and tobacco plantations. Since 1858, some sixteen thousand acres of land have been redeemed from the wilderness, and one thousand acres are now added every year. The work of clearing and cultivating goes on apace, and the yield of valuable timber from the extensive forests brings a considerable revenue. Lord Mayo's prediction seems in a fair way of being fulfilled.

Our German visitor cannot restrain his admiration of the system which has been pursued in the Andamans by the English government. Colonel Cadell, the chief commissioner, has, he says, the fullest right to be proud of the colony, over which he has presided for so many years. To use Mr. Ehlers's own words, "Here something has been done with English money and energy which can allow itself to be seen. Convicts, who behind the walls

of a prison would very likely have gone from bad to worse, are sent away from this settlement where they have had the opportunity of making their life pleasanter from year to year by better conduct, in an improved condition, and are returned to society as people who have learned to earn their living in an honest manner. That is much, very much, and anyhow a success which cannot be improved upon in imagination."

Turning now our attention from the colonists, we shall find the aboriginal inhabitants of the Andamans a not less interesting study from other points of view. It has been already said that, in character, they are not as black as they have been painted, but on social grounds they certainly do not encourage a close acquaintance, and the sight of them would be sufficient to keep most people at a distance without any repellent force of spears and arrows. Sir William Hunter presents a vivid picture of them in a very few words. Speaking of the deportation to the Andamans of the mutineers in 1858, he says that, "The stories of the Arab geographers and Marco Polo's legend of them as dog-faced anthropophagi gave place to stern realities. The convict settlement found itself surrounded by savages of a low and ferocious type, who decorated themselves with red earth, mourned in a suit of olive-colored mud, used crying to express the emotions of friendship or joy, bore only names of common gender which they received before birth, and whose sole approach to the conception of a god was that of an evil spirit who spread disease. For five years they continued bitter enemies of the colony, repulsing all approaches with treachery or by showers of arrows, murdering every one who strayed into the woods, and plotting robberies and arsons of a merciless sort." Another credible observer describes them as "men who in their habits of living are but few removes from the monkeys, or rather may be said, almost without exaggeration, to have rather the disadvantage of these

animals in appearance, with a quality of intellect scarcely expanded above idiocy, and a language of gutturals scarcely exceeding in range the grunt of hogs, the harsh scream of the jackal, or the whistling of birds."

Mr. Ehlers, who had many opportunities of seeing them, is somewhat more complimentary, but not much. He at least allows that they have "soft black skins, and sometimes quite pleasant features." Upon the last point we can find no authority in agreement with him. It is now generally allowed that the charge of cannibalism cannot be made out against them, and in features they are probably no worse than many other low-type negroes. Their origin is a perplexing question which ethnologists have not yet satisfactorily settled, for they differ from all the races on the mainland and on the neighboring islands. In many respects their greatest resemblance seems to be to the Papuans of New Guinea, but how they should have found their way to so great a distance in their frail canoes it is difficult to imagine. Some have conjectured that they are the degenerate descendants of African slaves who at one time drifted hither. Their skin is a sooty black. They are of small stature, scarcely any being over five feet in height, and many are much shorter; Mr. Ehlers affirms that they are only from three feet six inches to four feet six inches. Their heads are large, their shoulders high, their bodies protuberant, and their lower limbs comparatively slight. Yet they are muscular and extremely agile; and although they suffer much from fevers, colds, and lung complications, bowel complaints, headache, toothache, and rheumatism, and rarely live to be more than forty years of age, this is attributed to the exposed nature of the lives they lead and to the dampness of the climate, especially in those parts of the islands which they inhabit.

Their huts are built with four upright poles, uniting conically at the top and covered with branches or leaves. Their food, so far as it is not vegetarian, such as yams, roots, and

wild fruits, is principally fish and turtle, which aldermanic delicacy is very plentiful; but the *pièce de résistance* at their feasts is roast hog, when they can get it, and also roast rats. In point of fact they have little choice so far as animal food is concerned, for there is a great deficiency of animal life in the Andamans, almost the only mammals being hogs, rats, and ichneumons. The natives have only two meals, breakfast, and dinner towards evening, "English fashion," quietly adds Mr. Ehlers.

As to their dress much cannot be said, for the sufficient reason that there is not much of it to speak of. Yet the ladies of the race show some of that love of decoration which finds its supreme development in our Western fashions. With them, however, it is less fickle in its manifestation. To the back part of the girdle with which on high occasions they encircle their waists, they attach a sort of ostrich tail formed of leaves pointed upwards, and they will also wear necklaces of different sorts of shells, bones of the turtle, and pieces of the backbones or fingers of their departed relatives and friends.

The hair of the women is mostly shaved off with the exception of two narrow rows, sometimes in the form of a horseshoe, and these are kept so closely cut that the favorite Western practice of feminine warfare, which consists in pulling handfuls of hair from each other's heads, would be impossible to Andamanian ladies.

The men also shave off a great part of their hair, but they usually leave a kind of skull-cap, which they regularly treat with a solution of red ochre, whether to enhance their charms or to inspire greater terror it is impossible to say.

Being much incommoded with insects, the first business of the Andamanese in the morning is to plaster their bodies over with white mud. This has the disadvantage of concealing the elaborate tattooing, at which they are great adepts and which completely covers their backs, shoulders, and breasts, but it affords them the

substantial compensation that, drying in the sun, it forms an impenetrable armor against their insect foes.

In their hunting they use very well constructed bows somewhat in the form of a long S, and arrows about four feet long, pointed with iron-wood. They have also spears and harpoons. With these weapons they shoot and spear fish with remarkable dexterity, as well as hunt and shoot animals and birds.

These aborigines are monogamists, but their families are very small. A gentleman who visited the islands in 1869, only saw one woman with as many as three children, and he was informed that no other family possessed more than two. Mr. Ehlers tells us that they have a remarkable custom of giving away their children to the first family that desires to have them, and that the Andamanian who would refuse such a service to a friend would be boycotted. When they have thus got rid of their own children, and wish to have others, they simply go to a neighbor and in turn adopt his. If this be the fact it is by no means remarkable that in the second generation an Andamanian scarcely knows his own relations.

It is impossible to estimate the native population. Conjectures vary between two thousand and ten thousand. What seems certain, from observations amongst those near the settlements, is that the inevitable is overtaking them and that the race is fast dying out. Huts have been built for them near the convict settlements and many things done in the hope of winning their confidence and in some measure of civilizing them; but the hope seems destined to disappointment. There is no doubt a future before the Andaman Islands. They are becoming increasingly prosperous, increasingly salubrious, and will, ere long, no doubt, be a source of considerable revenue to the Indian government. They will be peopled with a vigorous and self-helpful race, and will testify to the wisdom and enlightenment with which this penal settlement has been conducted;

but of the dwarf savages who originally occupied these beautiful isles no trace will soon remain except in the strange tales and legends that will pass from generation to generation of the convicts and their descendants.

From Macmillan's Magazine.

SCHOLAR-GIPSIES.

A fugitive and gracious light he seeks,
Shy to illumine ; and I seek it too.
This does not come with houses or with gold,
With place, with honor, and a flattering crew ;
'Tis not in the world's market bought and
sold —

But the smooth-slipping weeks
Drop by, and leave its seeker still untired ;
Out of the heed of mortals he is gone,
He wends unfollow'd, he must house alone ;
Yet on he fares, by his own heart inspired.

MATTHEW ARNOLD'S "Thyrsis."

THE outlandish figure which a distinguished poet has added to our literature has been seen, or imaged, probably by many people. It is pleasing to think of such an inhabitant of the wilds ; and if we do not now see his grey cloak among the trees, we can still think of him as near us in all our wanderings abroad — just behind that ridge of hill or beyond that tangle of underwood — a shadow which shuns our inquiry. For, in truth, he is an enchanting figure, with his antique habit, his haunting face and wild, keen eyes which see many things that are hidden from others. He is a scholar, too, and a good one, for he carries books in his cloak ; and if we came up with him by some happy chance, we might find him reading Theocritus from an antiquated text of three centuries ago.

It is many a day since the story "ran through Oxford halls," and the Scholar-Gipsy has long since ceased his wanderings. Yet his spirit by some occult transmigration is still abroad in the world and in many unlikely places. Like the young Will o' the Wisp in Andersen's story, no rank, no profession is a safeguard against it. Sage men of law, scholars, divines,—all have felt this wandering impulse, which would lead them, like Waring, to slip off "out of the heed of mortals" and see the world of which they

know so little. And some who are wise in their generation, like this old scholar, seek to see both sides of existence, and add to their scholarship that knowledge of natural life, which is becoming rarer as we travel further from the primeval simplicity.

In former times this gipsying was part of a scholar's life. He was compelled to journey over half of Europe, it might be, to the college of his choice, in a time when journeying was not always pleasant and seldom safe. The laws against begging were relaxed in his favor. He had no baggage except a book or two, and with his staff in his hand he trudged merrily forward on his adventurous way. These men were the most cultured of their age. The head that was covered by that tatterdemalion bonnet might be debating grave points in the Aristotelian logic, or with Plato framing immortal commonwealths. A sun-browned scholar was not apt to suffer from pedantry or unreal visions of things; while to sustain him on his way he had his love for learning and many rich eclectic stores to draw on for his entertainment. In days nearer our own some few members of the fraternity still survived. Goldsmith, fresh from his desultory college life, tramped through many countries with his flute in his pocket, and gained that large kindness which makes one of the best features of his work. In our own day one of our most ingenious story-tellers has gone far and wide in many unchristian latitudes in search of wisdom and adventure. But after all, of the many who follow the life few ever attain to any reputation; for among other good things they acquire a genial contempt for fame, which is peculiar to men of genius and this disreputable brotherhood.

It is not that this wandering spirit is rare to-day, for it is essential to the natures of great men of science, travellers, explorers, and many men of action. These in pursuit of their callings travel in rough, far-away places, and live with a careless scorn of the luxuries of civilization. But the scholar is overmuch a man of books and col-

leges; pale-faced and dull-eyed, lacking the joys and humanities of life; yet still, it may be, with a drop of gipsy blood in his veins, which warms at the tale of wars and gallant actions and makes its possessor feel that his life is a very one-sided affair. Yet the way for him is easy; down one street and across another; and thence to the open country, to the green woodland, where the air is free and the great earth-mother as gracious as the Muses.

The union of the two lives is fraught with so many rich and apparent advantages, that its apologist is almost unneeded; for neither is perfect, and the defects of each are remedied in great part by the other. The scholar has a mind filled with many creations of romance and poetry. He can people the woods with beings of his own, elves and kindly fairy folk, which are gone nowadays from our theology, but still live in the scholar's fancy. That rare classical feeling, which one finds in Milton and Tennyson, which sees the fair images of an older economy in common things of to-day, is only possible for the scholar. The old wandering minstrel had his share of it. Nicol Burne the Violer, who wrote the ballad of "Leader Haughs," and may have been for all we know the original of Sir Walter Scott's *Last Minstrel*, has a way of introducing the divinities of Greece and Rome into the scenery of the Border country, which is distinct from any false classical convention.

Pan playing on his aiten reed,
And shepherds him attending,
Do here resort their flocks to feed,
The hills and haughs commanding;
With cur and kent upon the bent,
Sing to the sun good-morrow,
And swear nae fields mair pleasures yield
Than Leader Haughs and Yarrow.

An house there stands on Leader-side,
Surmounting my descriving,
With rooms sae rare, and windows fair,
Like Daedalus' contriving;
Men passing by do often cry,
In sooth it hath no marrow;
It stands as sweet on Leader-side,
As Newark does on Yarrow.

Further, nothing can so clarify and

perfect the intellectual senses as the constant association with beautiful natural sights. A strange sunrise or sunset is a greater element in the education of a man than most people think. Every appreciated object in nature has an influence, imperceptible it may be but none the less real, on the mental culture. Truth of perception, which was commoner among our grandfathers than with us, is one of the least of the benefits of nature. A larger sense of form and color and the beauty thereof, a finer feeling for the hidden melodies which may be heard hourly in any field, and a vastly increased power of enjoyment of life are things which some would not count too dear at any price.

The sadness, the continuous tragedy, which is inseparable from all natural life is bereft of its pain by the equipment of religion or an elevated philosophy with which we may suppose the scholar to be furnished. The savagery of natural people like the gipsies is no imagined thing; this wanton cruelty and callousness to the pain of others forms the darkest blot on their lives. The robustness of healthy outdoor life is in no way weakened if tempered with a sensitive sympathy for weaker folk.

As for the gipsy part, its advantages are far in excess of the somewhat slender stock that the scholar brings with him. The wandering among the fields and hills carries with it a delicate and abiding pleasure that to some means more than the half of life. The blessedness of mere movement, free and careless motion in all weathers and in all places, is incomparably great. One morning sees a man in a country of green meadows and slow lowland streams, where he may lie beside a tuft of willows and dream marvellously; and the next finds him in a moorland place, high up above the valleys, where the air is like new wine, and the wide prospect of country gives the wanderer a sense of vast proprietorship. Whether the heather be in flower and the wilderness one great purple sea, or whether the bent be grey and win-

try and full of pitiful black pools, it is much the same to him; for one of the marks of this spirit is its contentment with the world at all seasons. He may arrive tired and hungry at some wayside inn, and taste the delicious sleep of utter lassitude; or he may make his bed for the night in some nook in a wood among green brackens, and wake with a freshness which makes him wonder at the folly of man in leaving the open air for the unworthy cover of a house. For him there is no restraint of time or place. He can stay an hour or a week, as it suits him; he can travel fast or slow; he can turn, if the fancy takes him, away from the high-road down green, retired lanes, and enjoy the satisfaction which comes from long hours of leisure in the height of summer.

To the artist in life, the connoisseur of sensations and impressions, this manner of spending his days commends itself. There is a subtle influence about every place which dwells long in a man's memory, and which he may turn to time upon time and not exhaust its charms. Each type and shade of weather and each variation of scene leave an indelible impression, so that soon he will have a well-stocked gallery in his mind to wander through, when the dull days come and he is bound hand and foot to his work in a commonplace town. Every sound carries with it for him a distinct sensation; the crowing of cocks about a farm, the far-off bleating of sheep on a hillside, the ceaseless humming of bees, and theplash of the burn among the grey rocks. Rhymes run in his memory, confused lines of great poets which acquire a meaning never grasped before; and he himself gets into a fine poetical state, and dreams pleasant things, which are vast nonsense when written down, but which seemed to him there and then to be of the essence of poetry. What philosophical system of life, though it be followed ever so rigidly, can make a man so high and free in spirit? It must needs be that one who lives among great sights should win something of their great-

ness for himself. The artist, too, whether in colors or words, gains a becoming humility. He feels the abject powerlessness of his brush or pen to express, in anything like their pristine beauty, many of the things he meets with. Not dazzling summer days or autumn sunsets, for these come within the limits of his art ; but the uncommon aspects, like the dim look of the hills on certain days in April, — such make him feel the impotence of language.

The man who is abroad at all hours and seasons meets with many things which other folk never think of. Apart from mere fantastic sights, curious unions of earth and sky and weather, he begins to delight in the minutiae of observation. He loves to watch the renascence of life, the earliest buds, the first flowers, the young, perfumed birch leaves, the clear, windy skies. He can distinguish the call of the redshank or the plover among a concert of birds on a moor. He can tell each songbird by its note amid a crowd. Being out of doors at all times he becomes a skilful fisherman, though his tackle is often rude enough in all conscience ; for by the riverside he learns something of the ways of a man with a fish. He takes pleasure in long wanderings after a mythical bird or fern, for to him the means are no less pleasing than the end. Every object in the world acquires for him a personal charm. He is interested in the heron as in some fellow-fisherman ; the ways of the wren and linnet are not below his consideration ; he has actually a kindly feeling for the inherent depravity of the crow. And behind all, like a rich background, come days of halcyon weather, clear, ineffable April evenings, firm October days, and all the pageantry of the "sweet o' the year."

But above all such temporal blessings, there is that greatest endowment, which Wordsworth and Thoreau and Richard Jefferies sought and found, — the sense of kinship with nature. Our attitude is too much that of aliens wandering on sufferance in a strange coun-

try, or rather like children looking through the bars of a gate into a rich demesne. Now there is a great deal of very whimsical nonsense talked on this subject, but there is more than a little truth. Most people witness fine natural sights as exiles, feeling with a living regret that such are foreign and beyond their narrow world. But to the man who is much abroad these come with pain or pleasure, according to their nature ; but not as scornful, uncontrollable giants who mock his impotent wonder, but rather as forms of the great mistress whom he seeks to know. Rough shepherds on the hills have a way of talking of streams and weathers with a personal tone, as things which they meet in their daily life and have attained to some considerable knowledge of. Surely this is an enviable degree of kinship.

As a man's mind is richly advantaged, so also is his body. He loses the sickly humors, the lassitude, the dulness, which oppress all sedentary folk. His sinews grow firm and his nerves strong. Tramping many miles over heather and inhaling the wholesome air of the uplands, or basking in sunlight among the meadows, makes his frame hardy and active and his skin as brown and clear as a moorland trout-stream. He begins to feel the gaudium vivendi, the joy of living, that the old Greeks felt, who in their wisdom built the palaestra beside the school. All immoment philosophies, nugatory and unsatisfying endowments born of the dreams of dyspeptic townsfolk, are banished from his brain ; and he goes on his way with a healthy clarity of mind. He is not careful to seek an answer ; nor is he perplexed by the ravings of a vitiated decadence ; for he seeks only the true and strong in nature and art. But if he lacks in this he has other things at his will. His brain is a perpetual whirl of airy notions and wayside romances, which like the sounds in Prospero's island, " give delight and hurt not." In his wanderings, he meets with all sorts of odd people, whimsical and grave ; and he gets some little insight into the real

humor and pathos which habit in the lowliest places.

But after all it is more a matter of feeling than of practice. A man may live in the town eleven months of the year and yet be at heart one of this old romantic brotherhood. It is ingrained deep in the nature of some ; others are so cumbered about with wrappings of convention that they take years to get free. They are seldom talkative people, at least in houses and among strangers, so they go on their pleasant way for the most part undisturbed, though their wide toleration, acquired from their manifold experience of life, wins them some few friends. The class is of necessity a limited one ; for the majority of mankind are dull, equable folk, whose only romance in life is its close. But the eager, insatiable scholar and the wild, gipsy spirits, when in some rare case they come together, produce a union so enchanting that it is apt to seem to onlookers the very secret of life.

For, if the one exists without the other, there come those tantalizing regrets, those vistas of unused pleasure, which go far to make life a burden. Often when a man is sunk in town-life and thinks of nothing beyond, the mere sight of a bronzed face, a breath of the country, the glimpse of leaves or brown heather, and the old glamour of the greenwood is upon him and he grows weary with unsatisfied longings. Or, when one has been living for weeks in the heart of the natural world with a heathenish disregard of man and all human inventions, a stray book in the corner of an inn, a chance sight of an old friend, recalls to him that he has been living in error and he sets about mending his ways with all speed.

As for the end of life, when the strong man bows within us, surely it is they who have passed their days in ignorance of pain or true pleasure in a methodical existence, who have never felt the high hopes and the warm humanities of the scholar and the gipsy, who have never followed impossible ideals and eaten of the tree of knowledge whose fruit is for life, — surely it

is they who will find it hard to die.

The man who has lived the best moments of his life abroad with nature sees no occult and terrible import in its end, regarding it as the passing, the dying unto life, which falls to the lot of all natural things. So, like Mr. Standfast, when "the time comes for him to haste away and he goeth down, there will be a great calm at that time in the river."

In a grey university town in the north it was once my good fortune to know one who passed among his fellow-students with something of the air, I fancy, that the Scholar-Gipsy of Matthew Arnold must have had when by a rare chance he fell in with his friends of past years. He was courteous and kind to all, with a gracious condescension which was not that of a great man to an inferior but rather of a stranger from some wiser planet who had strayed for a while among us. With his keen, handsome face he passed through the quaint quadrangle amid the crowd of pale, over-worked weaklings, as one to whom learning came easily. He was a ripe scholar, beyond us all in classics, in philosophy, a lover of strange lore, learned in the literatures of many tongues ; but beyond these tangible acquirements there was that baffling sense of deeper knowledge which lurked in his presence, and puzzled the best of us with its evasive magic. In many of our memories his inscrutable figure long remained till it was effaced by more sordid impressions.

Some years afterwards I met him. It was one golden afternoon in the end of July, as I returned to the inn from the river with my rod and a scantily furnished creel. Sitting outside I saw my friend of former years and hastened my steps to meet him. He was much changed. His face was thin and his back bent, but he had still the same kindly look and smile. We passed the evening together in the garden thick with Jacobite roses ; and, as we talked, he told me bit by bit the history of his past.

His parents had died when he was young and left him a sufficient patrimony ; and his boyhood and youth had been passed much as he pleased in a moorland country. Here he had grown up, spending his days between study and long wanderings over a romantic country-side. In his college vacations it had been the same ; seasons of grim work varied with gipsying journeys, fishing and travelling in high, wild places. He became learned in the knowledge of the woods and many other things not taught in the schools, though he read his books with a finer zest and a widened humanity. After an honorable course at our college he had gone to one of the southern universities, and there after a career of unusual distinction he had settled down to the profession on which his heart was set.

But while his life was yet beginning he was mortally stricken with the national disease of which the seeds were in his race ; and young, rich, brilliant as he was, he had to face the prospect of a lingering death. His mind was soon made up. To him the idea of ending his life in the town, like a rat in its hole, was too awful to be endured. He got together some few necessaries and books, and quietly, with no false bravado, set out on his last journey. He was able to go only short distances at a time ; so through all the pleasant spring and early summer he travelled among the lowland country places, gaining contentment and a gallant cheerfulness from the companionship of nature. When I met him he had reached the borders of the great upland region in which his boyhood had been passed. He had only a few mouths at the most to live, but, though as weak as a child in body, he had lost not a whit of his old, gay humor.

The next morning I bade him goodbye ; and as I watched his figure disappearing from view round the bend of the road, I uncovered my head, for of a truth he of all men, had found *Natura Benigna*, the kindly mother.

In all times from the dawn of civiliza-

tion and the apportioning of humanity in towns, men have clutched at this idea of the life of nature and culture. This is the truth which lies at the bottom of all the wondrous erections and systems of life which artists and philosophers have wrought for themselves. This is the true Bohemia ; all others reek of foul air and bad tobacco, but this is filled with the very breath of Athena. The "plain living and high thinking," the "mens sana in corpore sano,"—all the varied shibboleths of the philosophies which have any consistent truth, are here realized in part or in whole. This, too, is the perfected doctrine of Epicurus, though the aim of its followers is less pleasure than completeness of life ; to explore the heart of this fair, divine kingdom, and not to dwell in a churlish and half-hearted manner in the outlying lands.

J. B.

From The Cornhill Magazine.
THE LAST GOVERNOR OF THE BASTILLE.

THERE has recently come into the hands of the present writer a little volume, the contents of which throw a curious light upon the internal economy of the Bastille during the time that Count de Launay filled the post of governor. The title of the book, which was published in Dublin in 1783, runs as follows : —

"Memoirs of the Bastille, containing a full Explanation of the Mysterious Policy and Despotic Oppression of the French Government in the Interior Administration of that State Prison."

"Translated from the French of the celebrated M. Linguet, who was imprisoned there from September, 1780, to May, 1782."

It is stated in the translator's preface that M. Linguet was, for ten years, one of the most distinguished of the councillors of the Parliament of Paris, and enjoyed a high reputation as an orator. But, unluckily for him, he undertook the publication of a periodical entitled *Annales Politiques, Civiles et Littéraires du 18^eme Siècle*, in which he ventured to

expose the abuses that then prevailed in the administration of nearly every department of the government.

The Count de Vergennes, one of the French ministers, was so exasperated by an attack made upon him in one of the numbers of the *Annales* that he obtained from the king a *lettre de cachet*, by virtue of which M. Linguet was arrested and sent to the Bastille.

In the course of the "Mémoires" this gentleman describes how prisoners who were not of high rank were, in his time, treated. He says: "Most of the cells are in the towers, the walls of which are at least twelve, and at the base thirty to forty, feet thick. Each cell has a small vent-hole in the wall, crossed by three bars of iron, so that a passage is left to the sight of scarcely two inches square. Several of the cells — and mine was one of these — are situated upon the moat into which the common sewer of the Rue St. Antoine empties itself, so that in summer, after a few days of hot weather, there exhales from the stagnant water a most infectious, pestilential vapor, and when it has once penetrated through the vent-holes into the cells, it is a considerable time before it is got rid of."

De Launay, it is stated, contracted with the government to supply the furniture of the prisoners' rooms at a fixed price, this being one of the many perquisites attached to his office. The furniture of M. Linguet's cell consisted of two mattresses, half eaten by moths, a matted armchair, the seat of which was only kept together by pack-thread, a rickety old table, a water-pitcher, two pots of Dutch-ware, one of which served to drink out of, and a flagstone to hold the wood fire. No dog-irons, tongs, shovel, nor poker were provided, these utensils being regarded by the governor as superfluous luxuries. The prisoners, too, were prohibited to buy these conveniences for themselves, since, had this been the case, it would have afforded palpable evidence to the government that De Launay had neglected to furnish the rooms in a proper manner.

In the winter, too, the prisoners fre-

quently suffered from the cold, owing to the insufficient supply of firing. "Formerly," says M. Linguet, "a proper quantity was allowed, and, without doubt, the instructions given on this point still remain the same. But the present governor has limited the allowance to each prisoner to six billets of wood a day, *large or small*. This economical purveyor of firing is careful to pick out in the timber merchants' yard the smallest logs he can find. Not only does he do this, but he selects those which are worm-eaten and rotten, they being, of course, the cheapest. By this course being pursued, although the purchaser is allowed a handsome commission on the transaction, the total cost of the firing to the government is less than it was formerly."

De Launay was allowed a fixed sum for the subsistence of each of the prisoners, according to his social position, the amount ranging from five livres *per diem* for a tradesman or other member of the *bourgeoisie*, to twenty-five livres for a marshal of France. This allowance was by no means an inadequate one, and had the money been expended in conformity with the intentions of the government, the inmates of the Bastille would have had, in this respect, no reasonable cause for complaint. But the privilege accorded to De Launay of purchasing provisions for the prisoners was, M. Linguet declares, abused to such an extent "that not only was the food provided inferior in quality, but it was, in most instances, so insufficient in quantity that there were prisoners who, at dinner, were not allowed above four ounces of meat." Consequently the savings thus effected alone amounted to no considerable sum.

Again, De Launay was authorized, as had been the case with his predecessors in office, to buy for the use of the inmates of the Bastille one hundred tunns of wine annually, without having to pay the *octroi* on them. The object of this exemption from the city dues was, of course, to furnish the prisoners with good wine at cost price. "But

the present governor," says M. Linguet, "sells this concession to a tavern-keeper in Paris of the name of Joli, for six thousand two hundred and fifty livres, and takes in exchange the worst kind of wines for the consumption of the prisoners."

De Launay, not content with the augmentation to his income derived from the above sources, went to the extent of letting out the grounds attached to the prison to a gardener; and in order to make the better bargain, those of the prisoners who had formerly enjoyed the privilege of taking exercise in the garden were rigorously excluded from it. In fact, it would appear from M. Linguet's statements that De Launay proved himself more ingenious in devising expedients for increasing the emoluments to be derived from his post than had been any of his predecessors.

The way, too, in which he obtained the post was characteristic of the social and political abuses which prevailed in France at that period, many of the most important appointments under government being sold to the highest bidder, quite irrespective of the qualifications of the candidates for filling them properly. Indeed, so general was the usage that no more odium attached to these transactions than does, at the present day in this country, to the purchase of the next presentation to a church living.

Under these circumstances De Launay—he being desirous of obtaining the governorship of the Bastile—entered into negotiations with the Count de Jumilhac, who then held the appointment, with a view of securing the reversion of the post, when the count, who was in bad health, should resign it. The conditions of the compact were that De Launay should pay the sum of three hundred thousand livres, and that his daughter, who would have a handsome dowry, should become the wife of the count's eldest son.

This arrangement was carried out through the interest with the ministry of the Prince di Conti, in whose service was a younger brother of De Lau-

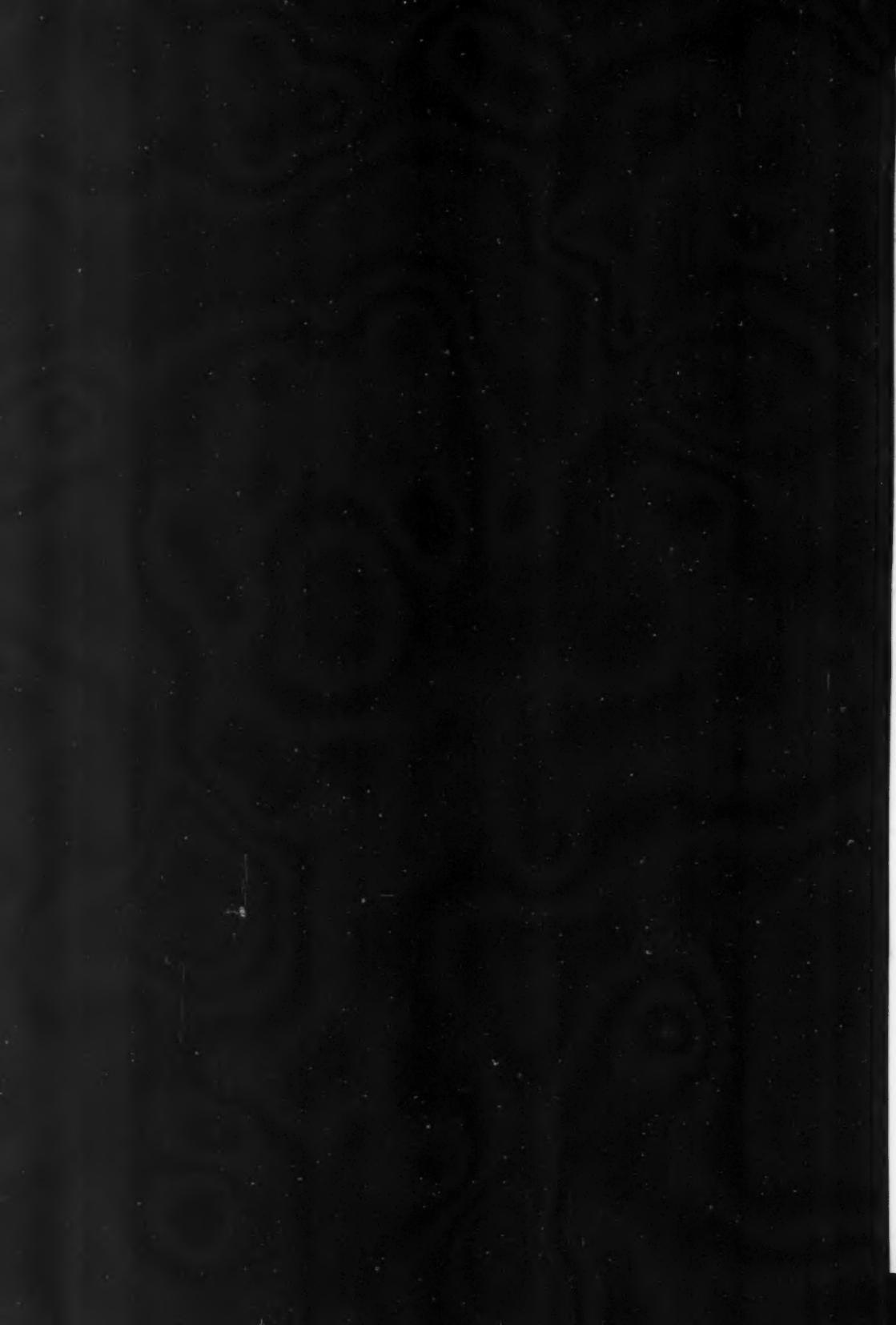
nay's, notwithstanding the fact that there were other candidates for the appointment who, besides being prepared to pay the price demanded, could plead in their favor previous services to the State. "This was not the circumstance," says M. Linguet, "with De Launay. He had never filled any civil post, and his military career had been brief and undistinguished." The influence of the prince, however, was all-powerful, and De Launay was secured the reversion of the post he sought.

The almost invariable result of an official being obliged to pay a large sum for any important government appointment was that, as soon as he was installed in the post, he sought to recoup himself for the outlay by practising the most outrageous form of extortion. This evil pervaded every department of the State, even the French judiciary, prior to the Revolution, being notoriously corrupt. More especially was this the case with the farmers of the revenue, who, at the same time, oppressed the people and defrauded the government.

The intense hatred with which the great mass of the nation regarded those individuals who had filled posts of any kind under government found expression, during the Revolution, by the members of that class being hunted down and put to death, under circumstances, in many instances, of the most revolting brutality.

In conclusion it may be said that, while perusing M. Linguet's narrative, the reflection naturally suggests itself how little could he have imagined, when he penned it in 1783, that, in the course of a few years, a terrible convulsion of society would take place in France, and one that should sweep away forever the abuses of which he had been the victim—that the Bastile, that odious monument of the oppression under which the people had suffered for countless generations, would be razed to the ground, and that the last governor of it was destined to meet a cruel death at the hands of an infuriated populace.





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